



**SECRET DESPATCHES  
FROM ARABIA  
BY T. E. LAWRENCE**

**Published by Permission  
of the Foreign Office**

**Foreword by  
A. W. Lawrence**

**THE GOLDEN COCKEREL PRESS**



Printed in England

## FOREWORD BY A. W. LAWRENCE

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ARTICLE 'SYRIAN Cross-Currents' which has not hitherto been printed, the contents of this volume were included in the confidential paper called 'The Arab Bulletin' which was issued at Cairo from 6th June, 1916, to 6th December, 1918. According to an editorial in the hundredth number, Captain T. E. Lawrence originated the idea of the paper. To supplement an 'Intelligence Bulletin' circulated by the General Staff of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, the Arab Bureau (a branch of the Intelligence) began producing 'Summaries' of political news received from the Turkish Empire, Arab and other Moslem countries, and Abyssinia. After six of these had been issued in typescript, in rapid succession, the 'Bulletin' received its final title and shape as a printed magazine. Henceforth its tendency was to appear at less frequent intervals and to contain articles of more lasting value. Of the first few numbers only twenty-six copies were printed, for distribution to the British authorities—civil, military or naval—in the Near and Middle East, and to the Foreign Office, War Office and Admiralty in London; the contents were to be treated as 'strictly secret'. Later, the 'Arab Bulletin' obtained a wider circulation. The names of contributors were then stated freely, whereas in the early issues articles were not signed nor even initialled; isolated instances do however occur in No. 9, and it may be significant that this (as well as No. 1) appeared under the imprint of 'T. E. Lawrence, Captain. For Director, Arab Bureau.' The regular editor was D. G. Hogarth.

In his own set of the 'Bulletin' T. E. Lawrence noted the authorship of a large number of unsigned articles. He is thereby known to have been responsible for at least ten items, before he left the office to participate in the Arab revolt; and one anonymous report, upon negotiations at the fall of Kut, is also plainly his work (it has been published by David Garnett, 'The Letters of T. E. Lawrence', page 208). As these early articles do not come within the scope of the present volume, some particulars may usefully be given here.

- No. 9. 9th July, 1916. Page 82. Article entitled 'Hejaz News'. Author's manuscript notes: *July* corrected to *June*, page 83, line 8; TEL at end, page 84.  
Page 85. 'Translation of Proclamation . . . by the Sherif.' *Englised by TEL* at end, page 88.
- No. 18. 5th September. Page 206. 'Note by Cairo' (on the handling of Oriental labour). TEL at end, page 207.  
Page 210. 'Hejaz Narrative'. TEL at end.
- No. 22. 19th September. Page 263. 'Further information of the Stotzingen Mission.' *Papers interpreted by P. Graves and TEL* at end of documents, page 272. 'Conclusion' by TEL, page 272; TEL at end, page 274.  
Page 276. 'Summary of Information given by Turkish Prisoners captured at Bir Aar.' TEL at end, page 278.
- No. 23. 26th September. Page 291. 'Notes' (on Diary of 1st Lieut. Grobba). TEL at end.  
Page 304. 'Note by Cairo' (on Arab and Turk Dispositions). TEL at end.
- No. 26. 16th October. Page 372. 'Note' (on Hejaz situation). TEL at end, page 373.

This edition includes all material ascribed to T. E. Lawrence, either by the text of the 'Arab Bulletin' or by his own marginal notes, after the time of his first visit to the Hejaz. His manuscript notes have been reproduced in italics inside square brackets, except for some verbal corrections which have been incorporated in the new text. The only omissions are: some cross references inserted by the original editor of the 'Bulletin'; a superfluous *neither* in the manuscript paragraph of 'Military Notes' (in the second sentence, which read *can neither increase neither their number*); in 'The Sherifial Northern Army', the word *Damascene* correcting the description *Bagdadi Officer* which is written in an unidentified handwriting beside the name of Rasim; *do.* in the same handwriting on the following line (about Abdullah). On the authority of 'Seven Pillars of Wisdom' the text of 'The Raid at Haret Ammar' has

been altered to read *ten box-waggons* instead of *two*, and *upended into the hole* instead of *the whole*. No doubt many other slips remain uncorrected, for as a rule the proofs cannot have been read by the writer. Comparison with his later accounts of the same incidents is not always helpful because of the extent to which they were re-written. The first of the post-war versions was impersonal and picturesque, to suit its purpose; it occupies three unsigned articles in 'The Times', of November 26, 27 and 28, 1918. Into 'Seven Pillars of Wisdom' he introduced a personal element which had been excluded from the despatches, and in places the tone is completely different. An extreme instance is the treatment of the battle of Seil el-Hasa, the despatch on which had been composed as a bitter parody (according to the last sentences of Chapter 86 of the public edition); and after the award of a D.S.O. on the strength of it, his reports on the remainder of the campaign tended to minimise his own share in events.

For the benefit of anyone who may consult the 'Bulletin', the following is a complete list of changes now made in the text on the authority of the manuscript notes. In 'Military Notes', *600* for *1,500* as the number of Arab infantry in the Turkish forces. In 'Raids on the Railway', *Mufaddhil* for *Mufaddlil*, *Tleih* for *Tleib*, *Serum* for (one occurrence only of) *Serun*, *Unseila* for *Unseih* (this correction is in an unidentified handwriting), Arabic letter *qaf* for *j*. In 'Wejh to Wadi Ais and Back', *bulging* for *bulbous*, *8 a.m.* for *Sam*.

The very sincere thanks of the publishers and editor are due to Sir Stephen Gaselee, in his capacity of Librarian of the Foreign Office, for allowing the publication of official material previously held secret; to Mr Philip P. Graves, part author of 'The Turkish Hejaz Forces and their Reinforcement', for the use of that article and for explanations of Turkish words; and to Mr B. E. Leeson, for the frontispiece.

A.W.L.



# CONTENTS

FOREWORD BY A. W. LAWRENCE	5
I. LETTER FROM SHERIF FEISAL	11
II. EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY OF A JOURNEY	12
III. EXTRACTS FROM A REPORT ON FEISAL'S OPERATIONS	20
IV. SHERIF HUSSEIN'S ADMINISTRATION	28
V. MILITARY NOTES	31
VI. PERSONAL NOTES ON THE SHERIFIAL FAMILY	35
VII. NATIONALISM AMONG THE TRIBESMEN	38
VIII. THE TURKISH HEJAZ FORCES AND THEIR REIN- FORCEMENT	40
IX. SHERIF FEISAL'S ARMY	46
X. DIARY OF A SECOND JOURNEY	46
XI. GENESIS OF THE HEJAZ REVOLT	52
XII. THE ARAB ADVANCE ON WEJH	52
XIII. THE SHERIFIAL NORTHERN ARMY	55
XIV. FEISAL'S ORDER OF MARCH	58
XV. NEJD NEWS	61
XVI. WITH THE NORTHERN ARMY	62
XVII. SYRIA: THE RAW MATERIAL	70
XVIII. GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND THE CAPTURE OF ESHREF	80
XIX. RAIDS ON THE RAILWAY	82
XX. NOTES ON HEJAZ AFFAIRS	96
XXI. WEJH TO WADI AIS AND BACK	97
XXII. IN SHERIF ABDULLAH'S CAMP	109
XXIII. THE HOWEITAT AND THEIR CHIEFS	111
XXIV. THE SHERIF'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS	115
XXV. THE OCCUPATION OF AKABA	119
XXVI. THE SHERIF AND HIS NEIGHBOURS	124
XXVII. TWENTY-SEVEN ARTICLES	126
XXVIII. THE RAID AT HARET AMMAR	133
XXIX. THE RAID NEAR BIR ESH-SHEDIYAH	137

XXX. GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES	141
XXXI. A RAID	142
XXXII. ABDULLAH AND THE AKHWAN	145
XXXIII. AKHWAN CONVERTS	148
XXXIV. FIRST REPORTS FROM TAFILA	148
XXV. THE BATTLE OF SEIL EL-HASA	150
XXXVI. REPORT ON KHURMA	153
XXXVII. SYRIAN CROSS-CURRENTS	155
XXXVIII. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FOURTH ARMY	161
GLOSSARY	172

## I. LETTER FROM SHERIF FEISAL

[Arab Bulletin, 8 November 1916. Written in accordance with the discussion mentioned in the following article, as is shown by a marginal note: *Oct. 24, T.E.L. and Feisal*]

Al-Hamra, Hegga 28, 1334 (26.10.16)

MY LORD AND MASTER, ALIBEY,

After kissing your noble feet, I acknowledge receipt of your noble order, sent with Abd el-Aziz Yadi. Its intimations were understood, and especially what you have mentioned about your marching, because I want to know seriously. I beg you to be very careful, because it is quite evident that if the movement should not be in combination, then the result will not be good. Therefore, I beg that you should make all possible arrangements concerning your movements; otherwise you had better not start from Rabegh unless my Lord, Abdullah, starts from Mecca, and he should start four or five days before you start. When he arrives at El-Hijrieh, you can march; and you must divide your forces into two; the smaller part of the two, say about 300 or 400 dromedary men, under the command of one of the family, should go to El-Milaf, where Ahmed Ibn Mansur is, and there he will have all Sobh, Zebeid, Beni Yum, and Beni Mohammed with him, and will defend the place (El-Milaf), and Beni Salem will follow those in El-Sidada, as I told them. The second division, which is the general force, must march as soon as possible towards the Fari road and camp at Mijaz, and cut the communication of the line of the enemy at El-Ghayir to threaten Medina; and I myself am going north to cut the railway line and besiege Medina, by the will of God. I am waiting your reply to Bir Said, and you must inform me:

1. About the number of your forces.
2. About the number of Abdullah's forces.
3. About the time of Abdullah's start, and with how many men.
4. About the day of your start.

I shall advance before you in order to attract the attention of the Turks, so that it will be easy for you to advance.



There is another idea which is that you may attract their (Turks') attention towards yourself, and may wait for two or three days, and then I will advance quickly to destroy the line. I am awaiting your reply and information. At any rate, one of the members of the family, either Zeid or Sharaf, must be sent to El-Milaf. Were it not for the movement of Juheina, I would have gone there myself. God willing, my stay will be at Buat or El-Jafr. I am awaiting your immediate orders, My lord.

Your slave, Feisal.

## II. EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY OF A JOURNEY

[Arab Bulletin, 18 November 1916]

*October 21*

**A**T 6 P.M. STARTED OFF FROM AZIZ BEY EL-MASRI'S tent at Rabugh. Sidi Ali, Sidi Zeid and Nuri saw me off. I had Sidi Ali's own camel, with its very splendid trappings. This secured me a vicarious consideration on the way. The Abadilla wasm is the 'secret sign' of the Port Sudan messengers.

Sheikh Obeid el-Rashid of the Hawazim Beni Salim Harb, and his son Abdullah came with me.

We marched through the palm-groves, and then out along the Tihamma, the flat and featureless coastal desert of Arabia. The Sultani road runs along this for the first fifty miles.

At 7 p.m. we crossed a belt of blown sand and scrub, about 500 yards broad, but only about a foot deep. It could probably be circumvented, but it was too dark to see. After that between 7.30 and 8 p.m. crossed several similar but smaller sandy hollows, and at 9.20 p.m. a deeper one. At 9.30 we stopped and slept.

*October 22*

Got going again at 3 a.m. The same sort of country till 4 a.m. when we came to the foot of a very low stony ridge, which proved to be a

narrow saddle of harrah, joining a small flat block of harrah near the sea to the main mass inland. I could not see how far off the sea was, but it is said to be only five or six thousand yards, and if so the place should be ranged for ship's fire. The neck crossed by the road is stony, and rather narrow, between low shoulders. It has been cumbered up by many tiny cairns, but it is not a difficult passage, except for low-built cars, for which some of the larger stones would have to be rolled aside. By 4.45 a.m. we were across the ridge and had descended into the Masturah, which is really the delta of Wadi Fura. Bir Masturah is at the north bank of the wadi bed, which is a gravel and sand area, well covered with scrub and thorn trees up to twenty feet in height. It seems to extend for some fifteen minutes west of the road, after which bare country extends towards the sea, and inland seems to run back for some two hours, and then contracts into the mouth of Wadi Fura, one hour up which is Khoreiba. Khoreiba may be a point of great importance, and should be examined. It is reported to contain wells, and a spring and running water, with palm-groves.

We reached Bir Masturah at 6.45 and stayed till 8 a.m. The well is stone lined, and about twenty feet deep and nine feet in diameter. On one side is a chimney (with hand and foot holes) running down to the water, which might be plentiful, if the well were clean. As it is the bottom is half full of stones. Forty yards south of the well is a rubble shelter, perhaps visible from the sea, and some reed huts for three or four families.

We left Bir Masturah at 8 a.m. and marched till 11 a.m., and again from 12.30 p.m. till 4 p.m. when the Sultani road leaves the Tihama towards the N.E. Till this point the going has been much as before, though it gets slowly worse for wheels, as the surface becomes softer. The ground is made up of chips of porphyry and basalt, set in sand, or sometimes of pure sand only, with a hard under-soil. Thorn trees are not plentiful after Bir Masturah. Tareif Beni Ayub, a very steep and bare range of hills, stretches away on the east of the Tihama. It seems to be about fifteen miles long, and rather narrow. North of it is a tangle of small rocky hills (covering much the same space) and then Jebel Subh,

a great mass of rocks going up to beyond Bir ibn Hassani. North of Jebel Subh is Jebel Gheidh. Jebel Radhwa is in sight to the N.W., and across the top of the Tihama, from near Ras el-Abyadh (Rueis) from S.W. to E.N.E. runs a range of low hills (Jebel Hesna) as though to meet Jebel Subh. The Sultani road runs north up Wadi Hesna towards these hills; but we turned off N.E. at 4 p.m. by a short cut. Wadi Hesna was sand with much broom-like scrub, and it marked the beginning of an intermediate area, between the flat Tihama and the rocky hills of the interior. The underlying characteristics of this intermediate area were low basalt ridges, but nearly everywhere they are covered with sand, on which is a good deal of coarse grass and trees, and sheep and goats were grazing in the shallow valleys which drained S.E.

At 5 p.m. we passed a stone that marked the north boundary of the Masruh dira, and the south end of the Beni Salim. At 5.30 we rejoined the main road, and followed it down slopes of loose and rather heavy sand to Bir el-Sheikh at 6 p.m. This is a Beni Salim village, with a short, broad street of brushwood huts and a few shops; also two stone-lined wells (said to be thirty feet deep) with plenty of good water. We left again at 9 p.m., and in the dark struck up more rough sandy slopes with some hard patches, trees, etc., till 12 p.m., when we slept.

*October 23*

Started again at 3 a.m., and followed down Wadi Maared between sharp hills. Many trees about. At dawn (5 a.m.) reached Bir ibn Hassani, at the junction of three great wadies. The confluence is about half-a-mile wide, of hard soil, and the village (where lives Ahmed el-Mansur, brother of Mohsin of Jiddah, and the Sherif's Emir-el-Harb) consists of about thirty stone houses. There are three wells. The Sultani road to Bir Abbas turns off to the N.E. up Wadi Milif or Mreiga, which drains off S.W. as Wadi Milif, towards Bir el-Sheikh and the sea.

Jebel Subh, just E. of Bir ibn Hassani, is fretted into the most fantastic shapes along the sky-line.

As we came by night I cannot say if cars would pass Bir el-Sheikh. I think not, though the run down to Bir ibn Hassani and the surface of the

valleys there are quite excellent. The mountains are apparently impassable except for Arabs or birds.

At 6 a.m. we left Bir ibn Hassani, turning N.W. up Wadi Bir ibn Hassani. The country changed instantly, as we had reached the third zone of the Hejaz littoral, that in which sand hills give place to bare rocks. The hills on each side of the wadi were as steep as possible, perhaps 2,000 feet high, of dull red granite or porphyry with pink patches, but with foot-hills, about one hundred feet high, of a dark green rock, that gave the lower slopes a cultivated tint. There were many trees (acacia to thirty feet, sunt, etc.), and enough tamarisk and soft shrubs to make the view from a little distance most delightful, almost park-like. The ground surface was of shingle and light soil, quite firm, with occasional rocky patches, and the valley was from 200 to 500 yards wide. We ascended it (a very gentle rise) till 8.15 a.m., when we reached a low watershed, across which were the ruins of two small rooms, and a wall of broken blocks from sky-line to sky-line. It may have been a former tribal boundary, or a fortified frontier. Across the watershed we were in the basin of Wadi Safra. The valley became more bare and stony, and the hills each side less variegated. After half an hour we passed a well on the east, next a little stone zialet in the mouth of a side valley. An hour later the valley joined a larger one coming from the N.E. and running S.W. down a gorge into Wadi Safra, on the further side of which we could just see the palm-groves of Jedida. Our track crossed this larger wadi, and went up a small affluent for half an hour, across another divide, and down a broad wadi for three-quarters of an hour to Wadi Safra in the middle of Wasta. The going underfoot from Wadi Bir ibn Hassani to Wasta, was rough and hard.

Wasta used to be a town of about 1,000 houses, divided into four hamlets scattered about Wadi Safra, which is here broad. The houses are built on earth mounds or the foot-hills, to be out of the floods, and there are palm-groves all about them. The place had had about 4,000 people, but a flood has broken through the banks and destroyed much of the groves, so that to-day many of the houses are deserted. It will take years to repair the damage, as the soil is gone.

We stopped in Wasta till 2 p.m. The houses are mud built, with ceiling of quarter palm logs, palm ribs, and pressed earth over all. There is a small market, in which the best things were dates, very sweet and good, and still plentiful, in spite of the locusts, which were bad this year. There is a running stream in Wasta; where this is artificially confined, it is a swift channel a foot or two wide. Lower down it is released, and becomes a clear slow rivulet, about ten feet broad, and eighteen inches deep, between thick strips of soft green turf. The palm-trees have little canals, a foot or two deep, dug among them, and are watered in rotation; in consequence there is a lot of rank grass in all the groves, and flowering shrubs. The same is the case in every hollow in the wadi, for water can apparently be found almost anywhere about two feet deep. The spring (the right to so many minutes of whose water daily or weekly is sold with each plot of ground), is not very good water, being a little brackish, and warm. Some of the wells of private water in the groves are excellent. Wadi Safra floods every year, sometimes several times. The water may be eight feet deep, and occasionally runs for two or three days. This is not astonishing, for every drop of water that falls on these polished hills must run off them as off glass, and Wadi Safra is the channel of a great drainage area.

The land and the trees are all owned by Beni Salim Harb, and the whole tribe lives on the produce of the valley. This is mainly dates, though a little tobacco, and some melons, marrows and cucumbers are grown, and grapes and fruits have been tried with success. The surplus dates are exported *viâ* Reis and Boreika to the Sudan, etc., and there exchanged for cereals and luxuries. This export seems to reach about 1,000 to 1,500 tons in a normal year.

The householders of the valley are all Beni Salim, but the actual work of cultivation is done by slaves (Khadim), of which every well-to-do house has four or five. These slaves are negroid, and with their thick bodies and fat legs look curiously out of place among the bird-like Arabs. They come from Suakin and Port Sudan originally, when small, with Tadrari pilgrims, passing as their children, and are sold on arrival in the Hejaz. When grown, the price of a male ranges from £60 to £30,

according to season and trade conditions. Being of such value, they are treated fairly well. In the towns they do household work, and have easy lives. In the villages they have to work hard, but have the envied solace of being allowed to marry the female slaves, and bring up families. These families are, of course, the property of the master, but etiquette prescribes the granting of reasonable privileges to a father and mother. Their work becomes light, and they are usually not separated from their children until these are grown up. They are all Moslems, but have no legal status, and cannot appeal to tribal custom, or even to the Sherif's court. When they fail to satisfy their master they are beaten, but by public opinion cruelty is discouraged, and on the whole they seemed a very contented lot. They are generally allowed a little pocket money, with which they add to their stock of clothes. About 5 per cent of Feisal's army was composed of them, the younger lads being preferred for service. There are supposed to be about 10,000 of them in Wadi Safra, and perhaps half as many again in Wadi Yenbo, which is the other great cultivated area in the middle Hejaz. The villages in Wadi Safra from its mouth to its source are Bedr Honein (the largest, said to have about 6,000 people), Bruka, Alia, Fara, Jedida, Husseiniya, Dghubij, Wasta, Kharma, Hamra, Um Dheiyal, Hazma and Kheif (or Jedida as the Turks call it).

I left Wasta at 2 p.m., and rode up Wadi Safra past Kharma (ten minutes) to Hamra at 3 p.m. The Wadi is from 100 to 300 yards broad, of fine shingle and sand, very smooth swept by the floods. The walls are of absolutely bare red and black rock, with edges and ridges sharp as knife blades reflecting the sun like metal. Thanks to the green of the grass and the gardens, the whole effect was very beautiful. At Hamra the place was swarming with Sidi Feisal's camel convoys and soldiers. I found him in a little mud house built on a twenty-foot knoll of earth, busied with many visitors. Had a short and rather lively talk, and then excused myself. Zeki Bey received me warmly, and pitched me a tent in a grassy glade, where I had a bath and slept really well, after dining and arguing with Feisal (who was most unreasonable) for hours and hours.



October 24

Awoke late. Sidi Feisal came to see me at 6.30 a.m., and we had another hot discussion, which ended amicably. This lasted till nearly noon, when I went out and explored Hamra, and went up towards Kheif to the sentinels, who were not in any danger! Hamra itself is a small place of, perhaps, 150 houses (hidden in trees on twenty-foot earth mounds), a little stream, and very luxuriant groves and grass plots. I talked to all of Feisal's men I could. They were dotted about all over the place, mostly Juheinah, and Beni Salim, Ahamda, Subh, Rahala, and Beni Amr. They seemed a very tough lot, and were most amusing; also, in the best of spirits imaginable for a defeated army.

Then saw Feisal again. This time everything went most smoothly, and he seemed less nervy. His optimism, or his contempt of the possibility of a Turkish advance, was curiously fixed.

At 4 p.m. mounted; with a new escort of fourteen Sherifs, all Juheinah, and mostly relatives of Mohammed Ali el-Bedawi of Yenbo, whither I am to go, by the Haj road. To reach this we went down Wadi Safra for a few minutes, crossed its bank, and entered a side wadi which opens on Kharma. The going is excellent, at first through very thick brushwood, but from 5.30 to 5.45 the path turns more west, up a stiff and narrow pass, confined on both sides by dry walls of large unhewn stones. This work continues down the other side of the watershed, for about two miles. It had obviously been a graded road, which had been in places only a revetted bank, but elsewhere a causeway sometimes six to eight feet high, through the gorge. The surface may have been paved, but is to-day all in ruins, and breached by the stream. From the remains it may have been twenty feet wide, but I saw it in the dark only, and could not examine it. It might have been the work of almost anybody, down to Mohammed Ali.

At 6.30 p.m. reached the bottom of the pass (now a very steep and rough descent) and took a road that passes a little to the north of Bir Said, across a most intricate system of wadies and small hills with some larger wadies bearing S. or S.W. and loose blocks of lava here and there. At 8.30 p.m. we reached Bir el-Moiya or Moiya el-Kalaat, a well just

under the ruins of a small fort on a low hill. It was probably a guard house of the Pilgrim road, over the water.

*October 25*

Started again at 3 a.m., up and down the same labyrinth of wadis, till 5 a.m., when dawn broke finding us in the middle of a confused harrah with sandy floor. The rocks were bent and twisted and cracked, most oddly. At 5.45 a.m. had got clear of this harrah, which died away in a great sea of sand dunes, interspersed with rocky hills, all spattered with sand to their tops. Numerous wadis drained this area, trending rather rapidly down-hill towards the sea, which was visible to the S.S.W.

We now held steadily west, with an occasional aimless tack towards the north. At 7.30 a.m. we were over the dunes and came out on a flat sandy plain, with a good deal of scrub and acacia on it at first, and with low hills, to the south, prolonged westward into a small coastal range. On the north were other low hills, spurs of the central mass to the north of them. (An easier road bending to the north, avoids the worst of the dunes.) From 7.30 to 8.45 a.m. we stopped, and then rode across an empty shingle plain till 10 a.m., when we entered a northern off-shoot of the small coastal range. Between it and the inland range was a rolling open space, falling from an indeterminate watershed a little north of our road into Wadi Yenbo, whose palm-groves were visible about six miles away on the N.N.W. Behind the groves was the huge bulk of Jebel Rudhwa, the most striking hill in the district.

The foot-hills we crossed were low, and enclosed a thorn-grown plain with a sandy floor. At 11 a.m. we came to the end of this, and rode over a small saddle on to the basin of Wadi Yenbo, which here was a very broad green belt of tamarisk and thorn, having on its eastern edge a conspicuous low hill with domed lava head, called Jebel Araur el-Milh, which deflects the wadi from S.S.W. to S.W. or even W.S.W. Above us the main channel trended up  $30^{\circ}$  N, for some distance. We stopped under an acacia tree in the wadi from 11.15 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then again at 3.15 to water the camels at a little water-hole of brackish water, about four feet below the surface in the main wadi, behind a wall of



tamarisk. After that we went on for an hour and three-quarters and stopped for the night. The country is again Tihama, made up of ten-foot slowly-swelling ridges and shallow valleys between. Wadi Yenbo main bed, where we crossed it, is about a mile and a half wide, but there are several smaller wadies, apparently subsidiary mouths, further west, and the stream, after crossing the track seems to swing round far to the west. The land between the track and the sea has a lot of scrub growing on it, so that the actual outlet of the wadi was not visible. The Tihama here is all so flat, that most of it goes under water whenever Wadi Yenbo comes down in strong flood.

*October 26*

Started again at 2 a.m. and reached Yenbo at 5.30 a.m. across a featureless but hard shingle and wet sand flat. Yenbo stands on a low stone outcrop, a few feet above the plain. I went to the home of Abd el-Kadir el-Abdo, Feisal's agent for military business, and a very well informed, efficient, and well-inclined official. He put me up for four days, during which I wandered back to Wadi Yenbo again to see the palm-groves.

On November 1, got on board the 'Suva'.

*Yenbo, October 29.*

T.E.L.

### III. EXTRACTS FROM A REPORT ON FEISAL'S OPERATIONS

[Arab Bulletin, 18 November 1916]

IN JUNE, FEISAL'S FIRST ATTACK ON MEDINA FAILED, partly because he was met by Kheiri Bey's troops; but more because his own men were short of arms and ammunition. The people of Awali, on whom he had relied to hold the water supply of Medina, went over to the Turks, out of fear, and were promptly butchered by them. The lost ground could not be recovered, and Feisal had to retire further and further till finally he came down to Yenbo and saw Colonel Wilson.

After this he was a little encouraged, and notified the Sherif that he could hold up the Turkish advance for fifteen or twenty days, till a diversion was made by another road, or till reinforcements came to him; and ever since he has been fighting by himself on the Sultani road. At first he drove in the Turkish outposts, and did them some damage, but then Fakhri himself came down to inspect, and increased the Turkish force at Bir Abbas to some 3,000 men. These pushed back Feisal into the hills. The Egyptian artillery had come up, and the Arabs had recovered confidence, but lost it again when they saw it was quite useless against the Turkish guns. No advantage was taken of its mobility, but it was used like field artillery against the Turkish pieces, of which one is said to have been a howitzer. The Egyptian shells never went near the Turks, but the latter by indirect fire nearly hit Feisal's tent, and terrified the Arabs beyond measure. Partly to prevent their utter demoralization, but more, I think, because he was bored with his own obvious impotence, Feisal withdrew to Hamra, leaving only a covering force to act on the defensive in the hills. The Turks made no attempt to push forward after him.

The effect of the fighting was to emphasize the Arabs' old [*silly*] regard for artillery. From Feisal down to the most naked of his men, they all swear 'If we had had two guns we should have taken Medina'; for they will not appreciate that the Turks are not as foolish as themselves in this matter. I don't think they have ever been near taking Medina, as Feisal's forces are only a mob of active and independent snipers. [*But we have got to reckon with this artillery mania of theirs, and give them the guns necessary as tokens to restore their spirits.*]

Feisal from Hamra proposes to retire to Bir Said for a few days, and then devote his personal attention to the Hejaz railway, the primary importance of which he is beginning to recognize. He will, however, not entertain the idea of cutting it by surprise, by small raiding parties, but wishes to take the Juheinah army, now at Tareif and Kheif Hussein (2,500-3,000 men), and make a grand assault on Buwat and Bir Nasif. He does not want to do this till Abdullah is approaching Medina on the eastern road, and till Ali or Zeid, or Sherif Shakir has reinforced Sherif

Ahmed el-Mansur (Feisal's successor), on the Sultani road. His idea is to distribute the Arab forces—each of which is available for service only in its own tribal district—as widely as possible, partly so as to raise the maximum number of men, and partly to break up the present Turkish concentration of almost all their force at Bir Derwish, which, as a common point of the Ghayir, (Fura), Gaha and Sultani roads, threatens Rabegh unpleasantly. *[The difficulty is the faulty intercommunication, inevitable till we supply field wireless sets.]*

It is, of course, hardly safe to prophesy, but I think that if the scheme works out, the Turks may have to retire from Bir Derwish to Medina, and to allot most of their present force to the duty of guarding their railway communications; and if the railway is cut, and kept cut, Medina may fall more quickly than is expected, as its civil population is reported to be already short of food, in spite of the date harvest being only just in. The locusts and the needs of the troops have caused a shortage. The railway is at present very insufficiently guarded.

If the plan fails, the next move is with the Turks. After what I have seen of the hills between Bir Abbas and Bir ibn Hassani, I do not see how, short of treachery on the part of the hill tribes, the Turks here can risk forcing their way through. The hills are not so high, and there is a good deal of water in the valleys, but the beds of these valleys are the only practicable roads, and they take the nature of chasms and gorges for miles, of an average width of perhaps 200 yards, but sometimes only twenty yards, full of turns and twists, without cover, and flanked on each side by pitiless hills of granite, basalt and porphyry; not bare slopes, but serrated and split and piled up in thousands of jagged heaps of fragments as hard as metal and nearly as sharp. Over these cliffs the Arabs run barefoot, and they know hundreds of ways from one hill-top to another. The average range possible is from 200 to 300 yards, and at point-blank ranges the Arabs shoot quite well. The hill belt is a very paradise for snipers, and a hundred or two of determined men (especially with light machine-guns, capable of being carried by hand up-hill), should be able to hold up each road.

To break the determination of the Arabs, the Turks have their artillery—and I do not see how that will help them much in the hills—their aeroplanes, which have not so far taken an active part in the fighting, but which appear to have reached Bir Derwish, and caused a panic by their mere rumour which may die off on acquaintance:—and, best weapons of all perhaps, money and moral suasion. They are actually spending a good deal of money, (some say £70,000 a month), and receive the most gratifying verbal assurances in exchange. I do not think these assurances have passed into action anywhere, except perhaps at Awali, when the outcome gave little encouragement to Arab participation on the Turkish side in future. They have a few Juheinah with them, and some Billi near Wejh, but the only Arabs with the main Turkish army appear to be three hundred Shammar, sent by Ibn Rashid, and some Ageyl, mostly Medina townspeople. The latter do not do much fighting.

The tribes taking Turkish money are mostly in touch also with the Sherif, and from what I could see the Sherif's is by far the most profitable and popular side at present. Not only does he spend more, but Feisal has made arrangements for rewards for booty taken; thus he pays £1 per Turkish rifle, and gives it back to the taker, and pays liberally for captured mules, or camels, or Turks.

Other things being equal, the Arab side will always have a definite preference, for sentimental reasons. To-day the Turks are feared and hated by the Arabs (except by such tribes as have been corrupted by the influence of Hussein Mabeirig), and the Sherif is generally regarded with great pride, and almost veneration, as an Arab Sultan of immense wealth, and Feisal as his War Lord. His cause has for the moment reconciled the inter-tribal feuds, and Feisal had Billi, Juheinah, and Harb, blood enemies, fighting and living side by side in his army. The Sherif is feeding not only his fighting men but their families, and this is the fattest time the tribes have ever known; nothing else would have maintained a nomad force for five months in the field. The fighting men in the Hejaz include any one strong enough to hold a gun, between the ages apparently of twelve and sixty. Most of the men I saw were young.

They are a tough looking crowd, all very dark coloured, and some negroid: as thin as possible, wearing only a loose shirt, short drawers, and a headcloth which serves for every purpose. They go about bristling with cartridge-belts, and fire off their rifles when they can. They are learning by practice to use the sights. As for their physical condition, I doubt whether men were ever harder. Feisal rode twelve days' journey in six with 800 of them, along the eastern road, and I have had them running and walking with me in the sun through sand and over rocks for hour after hour without turning a hair. Those I saw were in wild spirits, as quick as hawks, keen and intelligent, shouting that the war may last for ten years, and screeching 'Allah yinsur el Din' whenever they get to close quarters with the Turks, as they generally do; for on account of their fear of artillery all fighting has been taking place at night. These fights are rather quaint contests of wits, for the crowning piece of abuse, after the foulest words in their language have been sought out, is when the Turks in frenzy call the Arabs 'English', and the Arabs call the Turks 'Germans'. The Arabs take a number of prisoners, and some Syrians and others have deserted. The Turks cut the throats of all their prisoners with knives, as though they were butchering sheep. [*This fact depresses the Egyptian artillerymen, and perhaps we might arrange them preferential terms if they get captured by the Turks.*]

I wandered about amongst the Arab soldiers by myself a good deal, to hear what they were saying. They usually took me for a Turk, and were profuse in good humoured suggestions for my disposal. The only other theme of their talk was artillery, artillery, artillery, the power and terror of which they have on the brain. The report of the coming of the five inch howitzer to Rabugh nearly restored the balance of their last retreat from Bir Abbas in their own minds. It is, perhaps, worth mentioning that the Beni Amr (who has been weakened by Hussein Mabeirig's action), asked Sidi Feisal, when he retreated, if he now intended to make peace with the Turks, and received an indignant reply. I think most of the tribes (whose casualties have been almost *nil*), would regret peace at present, though perhaps the townspeople, who do not favour the Sherif, would welcome it.

If the Turks increase their force, and pass to the offensive, there are several courses open to them. They might invade the Tihama through the hills by the Sultani road, if the tribes break down. Such a move might be very dangerous for them, for one could never feel quite sure that the tribes would not collect again (the Rahala, particularly concerned, seem to be Feisal's best fighters), and it would almost be worse to have such hills behind one, across one's communications, than in front, to carry by assault. The Turks only own the ground they stand on, and can never neglect their flanks, till they have the tribes on their side. Also by the Sultani road they are brought down into the Tihama, where water and food are both scarce, and long camel trains will be necessary. *[It might be worth while keeping sea-planes and armoured cars at Rabugh for Fakhri is an untried man under orders of Jemal P. who is a fool. He is acting without German advice against an enemy he despises, which might at any time give us a gift such as should be a Turkish advance into the Tihama when we have organized a Rabugh force.]*

Another possible route towards Rabugh is by the central (Fura) road. Wadi Fura starts from near Ghayir, up to which the Turks have been smoothing the track from Bir Derwish. From Ghayir it runs down with half-a-dozen oases of palms and water to Bir Ridwan, and thence to Khoreiba, which is three hours inland of Masturah. It is the most direct route from Medina to Rabugh, and the best watered, but for some reason was not used by the Haj. I could get no details about its surface.

It must also be remembered that the rains begin in November, and may continue intermittently till January. In the rocky country no moisture soaks in; therefore wadis run in flood very quickly, and pools are formed everywhere. This works both ways, for while there is plenty of water for two months, you may find your road a chest-deep roaring torrent in three minutes. In the matter of water, what has most impressed me in the Hejaz (apart from the Tihama which is always parched), is not its scarcity, but its comparative abundance, and this at actually the driest season of a year whose preceding rains were very small.



Another possible Turkish course, and perhaps the wisest, in view of the danger to the railway, is to proceed with a gradual pacification of the Hejaz from north to south. The action of Basri Pasha in going to Wejh may be the first step in such a course, by confirming the Billi in their allegiance. The Sherif has forbidden the Billi his markets, and they are in the greatest straits for food. He is also in communication with most of the sheikhs, and is fanning discontent against Suleiman Rifada, to whom he has sent a twenty day ultimatum (expiring about November 15), threatening him with the fate of Hussein Mabeirig. The Billi are very anti-foreign, and much annoyed with the German-Turk alliance. A party of them in the Shefa have held up and kept a Turkish caravan, and Saad Ghoneim has increased his reputation by chasing a Turkish camel-patrol into Wejh. At present it is a toss-up which way the Billi go, and if they decide against the Turks it will make the subjugation of the Hejaz longer and more difficult.

If Basri Pasha succeeds in retaining the Billi, his next step should be to detach the Juheinah from the Sherif. They are newer subjects than the Harb, and should fall away the more easily, since economically they depend entirely on Wadi Yenbo for their existence. Wadi Yenbo runs from Yenbo up towards Buwat on the Hejaz railway, and in its lower course contains twenty-four oases of running water and palm-gardens, with a population of perhaps 20,000, mostly slaves, who cultivate the land. The entire tribe of the Juheinah feeds on the produce of this valley, whose occupation, as it is surrounded by rather easy down-country, seems a feasible operation for a considerable Turkish force. The Sherif would then be confined to the Hamra-Mecca area, and could no longer threaten the railway.

The next step would be the occupation of Wadi Safra, similar to, but smaller than, Wadi Yenbo, which is to the Beni Salim what Wadi Yenbo is to the Juheinah. By occupying Wadi Safra the Turks would ensure the extermination or submission of the Beni Salim, and would be in a position to make direct use of the disaffection caused by Sheikh Hussein.

This process seems to me a possible one for the conquest of the Hejaz,

if the Arabs by working against the railway can frighten the Turks from an immediate advance down the Sultani or Fura roads. At the same time I do not think it can be done by force, by the Turkish troops now available, or by fraud on their present expenditure. On the other hand the news we picked up of the Turkish intentions looks as though they did mean to push through to Mecca: in which case either Wadi Fura is practicable, or they are, in my opinion, under-estimating the country with which they have to deal. [*Looked at locally the bigness of the Revolt impresses me.*]

We have here a well-peopled province, extending from Um Lejj to Kunfida, more than a fortnight long in camel journeys, whose whole nomad and semi-nomad population have been suddenly changed from casual pilferers to deadly enemies of the Turks, fighting them, not perhaps in our manner, but effectively enough in their own way, in the name of the religion which so lately preached a Holy War against us. This has now been going on for five months, during which time they have created, out of nothing, a sort of constitution and scheme of government for the areas behind the firing line. [*They believe that in liberating the Hejaz they are vindicating the rights of all Arabs to a national political existence, and without envisaging one state or even a federation, they are definitely looking North towards Syria and Bagdad. They do not question the independence of the Imam or of ibn Saud. They wish to confirm them . . . but they want to add an autonomous Syria to the Arab estate.*]

Above and beyond everything we have let loose a wave of anti-Turkish feeling, which embittered as it has been by some generations of subjection may die very hard. There is in the tribes in the firing line a nervous enthusiasm common I suppose to all national risings. A rebellion on such a scale as this does more to weaken a country than unsuccessful foreign wars, and I suspect that Turkey has been harmed here more than it will be harmed elsewhere till Constantinople is captured and the Sultan made the puppet of European advisers.]

The Yeni Turan movement is keenly discussed in the Hejaz, where its anti-Arab and anti-Islamic character is well understood. The peace conference will, I think, see a demand from the Sherif for the transfer of



the Holy relics from Constantinople to Mecca, as a sign that the Turks are unworthy longer to be the guardian of such things.

The Arab leaders have quite a number of intelligent level-headed men among them, who, if they do not do things as we would do them, are successful in their generation. Of course they lack experience—except of Turkish officialdom, which is a blind leader—and theory; for the study of practical economies has not been encouraged. However, I no longer question their capacity to form a government in the Hejaz, which is better, so far as the interests of the subjects are concerned, than the Turkish system which they have replaced. *[They are weak in material resources and always will be, for their world is agricultural and pastoral and can never be very rich or strong. If it were otherwise we would have had to weigh more deeply the advisability of creating in the Near East a new power with such exuberant national sentiment. As it is, their military weakness which for the moment incommodes us should henceforward ensure us advantages immeasurably greater than the money, arms and ammunition we are now called upon to spare.]*

Yenbo, October 30.

T.E.L.

#### IV. SHERIF HUSSEIN'S ADMINISTRATION

[Arab Bulletin, 26 November 1916]

WITH THE COUNTRY IN ITS PRESENT CRITICAL state of war, only the main outlines of the Sherif's administration have emerged. There is seen to be an opposition between town and country. The former continues under a simplification of the Ottoman system; the latter is becoming patriarchal, for the Sherif deals with the sheikhs direct as his officials, and does not hesitate to remove them and replace them by others of their family (as we are doing in Mesopotamia) when they prove unsatisfactory. Their authority and status as intermediaries between their tribesmen and the central power are being increased by the Sherif, instead of sapped, as by the Ottoman system. Within the tribe,

of course, their rule is a nominal autocracy, so hedged about by tribal opinion and custom as to be little more than general assent in practice.

In the towns the Sherif has nominal governors, but the real business may be in the hands of an agent who is his man, but who has to act gently, to avoid arousing the jealousy of the less competent but great local man, who would be easily driven into the arms of the Turks. Strong men found the Turkish Government not uncongenial, for it allowed scope for partiality, and the Sherif seems by nature just.

The Turkish civil code has been abolished. In the towns the cadis administer the undiluted Sharia, and in the tribes matters are still to be settled by tribal law, with final reference to the Sherif or his Kaimmakam. The Sherif intends, when there is time, to extend the principles and scope of the Sharia to cover modern difficulties of trade and exchange!

The multiplicity of Turkish officials has been abolished. Most of the offices are working on a fraction of the old staff.

The Turkish system of internal taxation is in abeyance. The taxes used to be only occasionally collected, and then by flying columns of gendarmes, and the vexation was greater than the profit. Also at present the manhood of the Hejaz is under arms, and so exempt from dues. The ten per cent *ad valorem* customs rate on imports, and the five per cent on exports remain in force. In Jiddah the yield is said not to be very great, as the Sherif's imports are so generous, as to discourage private enterprise. At Yenbo the customs receipts average about £600 a month, and more than cover the salaries and public improvements now in hand.

The urban *octroi* is retained.

The police are usually the Sherif's own Bishawi retainers, and seem quiet and efficient; but the return to chthonic conditions has meant the restoration of tribal or family authority, and a great decrease in the exercise of the central government. Sherif Hussein is a student of Bedouin policy and customs, and with his usual wisdom has silently sanctioned their restoration wherever they have retained their vitality. The higher government, in Arab areas, has always been an excrescence, only troubling the people when it touches them.

*Finance.*

The two ports, Jiddah and Yenbo, probably each make a small profit of receipts over administrative charges. Mecca and the army are the two great expenses of the Hejaz government, and the actual cost of each it is not possible yet to estimate. At Mecca, the Imaret expenses before the war were £1,000 a month. They have since largely increased. In addition there are expenses in the town, and just now large charitable doles to replace the diminished pilgrimage receipts.

On the army the expenditure is heavy. Dhelul riders (rikab) are paid £2 a month, and £4 or £5 for their camel and its food. Arabs get about £3 a month, and soldiers £2 a month. All men are fed, and, generally, their families as well.

The forces actually mobilized are continually shifting. A family will have a gun, and its sons will serve in turn, perhaps week by week, and go home for a change as often as replaced. Married men drop off occasionally to see their wives, or a whole clan gets tired, and takes a rest. For these reasons the paid forces are more than those serving, and this is necessary, since by tribal habit wars are always very brief, and the retention in the field of such numbers as the Sherif has actually kept together is unprecedented. Policy further often involves the payment to sheikhs of the wages of their contingent, and many such payments are little more than disguised bribes to important individuals.

Sherif Feisal receives a lump sum of £30,000 a month from his father, and complete discretion. He keeps on foot about 8,000 men with this money (3,000 Sultani road and Hamra, 1,000 at Tareif, 800 near Bow-at, 1,000 with Saad el-Ghoneim, 2,000 at Kheif Hussein) and with the surplus (perhaps £6,000) is working on the cupidity of the more distant tribes. Representatives of the Fakir, the Billi and Nuri Shaalan were with him when I was there, and with them all were being arranged the foundations of a complete understanding of common action, when the Sherif's forces were near enough to lend efficient support.

Sidi Ali has no fixed allowance, but receives from Mecca what he asks for. He says it is not less than £25,000 a month, and has been £35,000. He keeps about 3,000 men with him, and has a large, but rather

nebulous contingent watching the Ghayir, Fura, and other central roads.

Sidi Abdullah, as the Sherif's most politic son, has probably what money he wants, though since Taif fell he cannot have spent very much. He has now, however, a force of Ateibah, Harb and Meteir mobilized for action on the eastern road.

On the whole, therefore, one may perhaps suggest for the Hejaz monthly expenses:—

	£
Mecca ... ..	5,000
Jiddah, etc. ... ..	2,000
Emirate ... ..	3,000
Sidi Ali ... ..	30,000
Sidi Abdullah? ... ..	30,000
Sidi Feisal ... ..	30,000

It is not likely that Sherif Hussein makes any real economies in gold at present, and one can see everywhere that money, and money only, is going to give us the breathing space necessary to equip the Arab armies for the taking of Medina.

## V. MILITARY NOTES

[Arab Bulletin, 26 November 1916]

### *Sherifial Forces*

#### (a) *Numbers*

I THINK TO-DAY THE SHERIF HAS PROBABLY IN ALL about 15,000 to 20,000 men mobilized. These are divided up in local forces, from Um Lejj to Kunfida. The largest bodies of men are probably the 3,000 formerly with Feisal, and those with Sherif Ali at Rabugh. Sherif Abdullah may have as many with him.

#### (b) *Composition*

With the exception of the Bishawi retainers and the 'soldiers' at Rabugh, these forces are entirely tribal. About ten per cent are camel

corps and the rest infantry, some of whom are desert tribes, and some hill tribes. I did not see much (or think much) of the desert tribes, but the hill men struck me as good material for guerilla warfare. They are hard and fit, very active, independent, cheerful snipers. They will serve only under their tribal sheikhs, and only in their home district or near it. They have suspended their blood feuds for the period of the war, and will fight side by side with their old blood enemies, if they have a Sherif in supreme command; except in exceptional circumstances they would not, I think, obey the orders of a man belonging to any other tribe. The lack of discipline—or rather of control—allows them to go home and see their wives and families when they please, if they produce a substitute; the personnel of the army thus changes incessantly; this is inevitable in tribal warfare.

There is a sheikh usually to every hundred or so men. He is paid their wages, and is responsible for their being fed, and ready for action in their stated strength when called upon.

(c) *Tactics*

The tribal armies are aggregations of snipers only. Before this war they had slow old muskets, and they have not yet appreciated fully the uses of a magazine rifle. They would not use bayonets, but enjoy cutting with swords. No man quite trusts his neighbour, though each is usually quite wholehearted in his opposition to the Turks. This would not prevent him working off a family grudge by letting down his private enemy. In consequence, they are not to be relied on for attack in mass. They are extremely mobile, and will climb or run a great distance to be in a safe place for a shot—preferably at not more than 300 yards range, though they are beginning to use their sights empirically. They shoot well at short ranges, and do not expend much ammunition when in contact with the enemy, though there is any amount of joy-firing at home. Feisal gives them fifty cartridges each, keeps a tight hold of his reserves, and prevents waste as far as possible.

The Arabs have a living terror of the unknown. This includes at present aeroplanes and artillery. The sound of the discharge of a cannon sends every man within earshot to cover. They are not afraid of bullets,

or of being killed—it is just the manner of death by artillery that they cannot stand. They think guns much more destructive than they really are, but their moral confidence is probably as easily restored, as it is easily shaken. A few guns—useful or useless—on their side would encourage them to endure the Turkish artillery, and once they get to know it, most of their terror will pass. At present they fight only at night, so that the Turkish guns shall be blind.

(d) *Possibilities*

I think one company of Turks, properly entrenched in open country, would defeat the Sherif's armies. The value of the tribes is defensive only, and their real sphere is guerilla warfare. They are intelligent, and very lively, almost reckless, but too individualistic to endure commands, or fight in line, or help each other. It would, I think, be impossible to make an organized force out of them. Their initiative, great knowledge of the country, and mobility, make them formidable in the hills, and their penchant is all for taking booty. They would dynamite a railway, plunder a caravan, steal camels, better than anyone, while fed and paid by an Arab authority. It is customary to sneer at their love of pay, but it is noteworthy that in spite of bribes, the Hejaz tribes are not helping the Turks, and that the Sherif's supply columns are everywhere going without escort in perfect safety.

I do not think the tribal armies will break up unless:—

- (a) money runs short with the Sherif.
- (b) the Turks occupy their home waters and palm-groves.
- (c) they attempt a pitched battle (when their defeat and casualties would appal them).
- (d) the Sherif loses his prestige as an exclusively Arab sovereign.

*Turkish Forces*

(a) *Numbers*

The two armies are not dissimilar in numbers; though the Turkish force is concentrated, and the Arab force is excessively distributed.

A difference in character between the Turkish and Arab armies, is, that the more you distribute the former the weaker they become, and

the more you distribute the latter the stronger they become. This point is now going to be made use of by the Sherifs.

(b) *Composition*

The Turkish forces contain about 600 Arab infantry, and about 500 Arab (Ageyl) camel-men; also 300 Shammar tribesmen from Nejd. The rest of their men are Turks, and all infantry, except for the camel corps, a handful of cavalry, and detachments of mule-riders.

Their composition renders them deficient in mobility, and the Shammar are the only light troops they possess capable of extended mounted raids; the latter will probably (being tribesmen) not remain very long.

(c) *Tactics*

The Turks have so far restrained themselves entirely to action in the plains, where they have the support of their artillery. They have not yet attempted to attack the hills.

(d) *Plans*

The Turks have plenty of food for the men; there has generally been a shortage of hay, not much barley, enough water. They can allot 130 camels per battalion for the Bir Abbas force, and at the same time maintain their troops at Bir Derwish.

It is not easy to see why they have not advanced. Their cause is steadily losing ground among the tribes, who are also gaining experience in the new mode of fighting. It may be that the cholera at Medina is serious . . . or they may be short of the necessarily very large reserve of food required for an advance to Mecca; or they may be afraid of our landing forces at Rabugh.

They also know that as long as Feisal's army is in being—and it should be in being as long as he preserves its present elasticity and avoids a decisive action—their communications with a column advancing on Mecca from Medina would be almost impossible to keep open, without very greatly increased forces or a block-house system.

It would, I think, be quite possible for a small self-contained force to re-take Mecca; and, if the tribes still kept their present determination, impossible to retain it. [*The Sherif's present forces are tribal volunteers. Their virtues are mobility and knowledge of the country, and therefore we can*



increase neither their number nor their baggage. Foreign artillery units, like the Egyptian, are a mistake. On the other hand these tribal forces must be strengthened by light machine-guns, manned by themselves. As many Lewis guns as are available at once, as a sniper's accessory, and some mountain guns as amulets to restore public confidence are immediately required. This tribal force will never finish the war (unless the Turks have not enough men to defend their railway) as it will never be capable of an offensive. We should utilize it as a screen behind which to build up for the Sherif a field force with good mobility, which shall be capable of meeting a Turkish force distracted by guerilla tactics, and defeating it piece-meal. This force will have to be recruited from towns-people, slaves and villagers.]

[Argument against landing foreigners at Rabugh.]

The Hejaz war is one of dervishes against regular troops—and we are on the side of the dervishes. Our text-books do not apply to its conditions at all. It is the fight of a rocky, mountainous, ill-watered country (assisted by a wild horde of mountaineers) against a force which has been improved—so far as civilized warfare is concerned—so immensely by the Germans, as almost to have lost its efficiency for rough-and-tumble work.

Jiddah, November 3, 1916.

## VI. PERSONAL NOTES ON THE SHERIFIAL FAMILY

[Arab Bulletin, 26 November 1916]

ONE CAN SEE THAT TO THE NOMADS THE SHERIF and his three elder sons are heroes. Sherif Hussein (Sayidna as they call him), is outwardly so gentle and considerate as to seem almost weak, but this appearance hides a deep and crafty policy, wide ambitions and an un-Arabian foresight, strength of character and persistence. There was never any pan-Arab secret society in Mecca, because the Sherif has always been the Arab Govern-



ment. His influence was so strong in the tribes and country districts, as to be tantamount to administration; and in addition he played Arabs' advocate in the towns against the Turkish Government.

Particularly have his tastes and sympathies been always tribal. The son of a Circassian mother, he is endowed with qualities foreign to both Turk and Arab, but he determined to secure the hearts of the nomads by making his sons Bedouins. The Turks had insisted that they be educated in Constantinople, and Sherif Hussein agreed most willingly. They have all had a first-class Turkish education, and profit by their knowledge of the world. However, when they came back from Constantinople as young Levantines, wearing strange clothes and with Turkish manners, Sherif Hussein at once made them change into Arab things, and rub up their Arabic. He gave them Arab companions, and a little later sent for them, to put them in command of some small bodies of Arab camel corps, patrolling the pilgrim roads against the Auf. The young Sherifs fell in with the plan, as they thought it might be amusing, but were rather dashed when they were forbidden to take with them special food, or bedding, or saddle cushions, and still more when they were not given permission to come to Mecca for the Feast, but had to spend all the season out in the desert with their men, guarding the roads day and night, meeting nomads only, and learning to know their country and their manners.

They are now all thorough Bedouins, and as well have from their education the knowledge and experience of Turkish officials, and from their descent that blend of native intelligence and vigour which so often comes from a cross of Circassian and Arab blood. This makes them a most formidable family group, at once admired and efficient. It has, however, left them curiously isolated in their world. None of them seems to have a confidant or adviser or minister, and it is doubtful whether any one of them is fully intimate with another or with their father, of whom they all stand in awe.

*Sidi Ali*.—Short and slim, looking a little old already, though only thirty-seven. Slightly bent. Skin rather sallow, large deep brown eyes, nose thin and a little hooked, face somewhat worn and full of lines and

hollows, mouth drooping. Beard spare and black. Has very delicate hands. His manners are perfectly simple, and he is obviously a very conscientious, careful, pleasant, gentleman, without force of character, nervous and rather tired. His physical weakness makes him subject to quick fits of shaking passion with more frequent moods of infirm obstinacy. Apparently not ambitious for himself, but swayed somewhat too easily by the wishes of others. Is bookish, and learned in law and religion. Shows his Arab blood more than his brothers.

*Sidi Abdullah.*—Aged thirty-five, but looks younger. Short and thick built, apparently as strong as a horse, with merry dark brown eyes, a round smooth face, full but short lips, straight nose, brown beard. In manner affectedly open and very charming, not standing at all on ceremony, but jesting with the tribesmen like one of their own sheikhs. On serious occasions he judges his words carefully, and shows himself a keen dialectician. Is probably not so much the brain as the spur of his father. He is obviously working to establish the greatness of the family, and has large ideas, which no doubt include his own particular advancement. The clash between him and Feisal will be interesting. The Arabs consider him a most astute politician, and a far-seeing statesman: but he has possibly more of the former than of the latter in his composition.

*Sidi Feisal.*—Is tall, graceful, vigorous, almost regal in appearance. Aged thirty-one. Very quick and restless in movement. Far more imposing personally than any of his brothers, knows it and trades on it. Is as clear-skinned as a pure Circassian, with dark hair, vivid black eyes set a little sloping in his face, strong nose, short chin. Looks like a European, and very like the monument of Richard I, at Fontevraud. He is hot tempered, proud and impatient, sometimes unreasonable, and runs off easily at tangents. Possesses far more personal magnetism and life than his brothers, but less prudence. Obviously very clever, perhaps not over scrupulous. Rather narrow-minded, and rash when he acts on impulse, but usually with enough strength to reflect, and then exact in judgment. Had he been brought up the wrong way might have become a barrack-yard officer. A popular idol, and ambitious; full of dreams,

and the capacity to realize them, with keen personal insight, and a very efficient man of business.

*Sherif Zeid.*—Aged about twenty. Is quite overshadowed by the reputation of his half-brothers. His mother was Turkish and he takes after her. Is fond of riding about, and playing tricks. Has not so far been entrusted with any important commission, but is active. In manner a little loutish, but not a bad fellow. Humorous in outlook, and perhaps a little better balanced, because less intense, than his brothers. Shy.

*Yenbo, October 27, 1916.*

T.E.L.

## VII. NATIONALISM AMONG THE TRIBESMEN

[Arab Bulletin, 26 November 1916]

TRIBAL OPINION IN THE HEJAZ STRUCK ME AS INTENSELY national, and more sophisticated than the appearance of the tribesmen led one to expect. These ideas can hardly have been acquired from the educated in the towns, for Jiddah and Mecca are not Arab in their composition, but are collections of Javanese, Sudanese, Hindus, Turks, and Bokhariots, without sympathy with Arab ideals, and at present suffering somewhat from the force of Arab sentiment, which is too lately released from Turkish compression to be quite under control.

Seeking the cause of this sudden growth of national feeling, I was informed that German propaganda was an important contributory factor. The Germans preached *Jihad* for the first few months of the war, till they saw that the idea had fallen flat. They then skipped across at once to a base of nationalism, and tried to awaken in the provinces, the (in their opinion) dormant Ottoman sensibility. They taught that Germans were Germans, and British, British; and, therefore, it behoved the Ottomans to be Ottoman, and to assert their separate existence, in the name of the principle of nationality. The fate of the Armenians was the Turkish reading of that lesson . . . and the Hejaz rising was the Arab

reaction to this and other influences. Instinct (the Arab believes himself superior to all other races), money, and the counsels and example of the family of Sherif Hussein found an unexpected ally in German propaganda and Neo-Turk and Yeni Turan dogma.

Whatever the cause, Arab feeling in the Hejaz runs from complete patriotism amongst the educated Sherifs down to racial fanaticism in the ignorant. One thing, of which the tribes are convinced, is that they have made an Arab Government, and consequently that each of them is it. The towns are sighing for the contented obstructionist inactivity of the Ottoman Government, or for the ordered quiet of our own rule; the tribes know they are independent, and mean to enjoy their independence. This will not entail anarchy, since the family tie and the system of tribal responsibility will be tightened, but it entails the practical disappearance or negation of central power in internal affairs. The Sherif may have his political sovereignty abroad, and shall have it—so far as the tribesmen can secure it; but their home affairs must be settled by their own tribal sheikhs. 'Is Damascus to rule the Hejaz, or can we rule Damascus?' said a Sherif, and it would be hard to say which would be the bigger problem. However, they will not allow it to be set for decision: for their idea of nationality is the independence of tribes and parishes, and their idea of national union is episodic, combined, resistance to an intruder. Constructive politics, an organized state, and an extensive empire, are not only beyond their capacity, but anathema to their instincts. They are fighting to get rid of empire, not to win it, and the only unity that is possible is one to which they are forced by foreign influence, or control. Unless we, or our allies, make an efficient Arab empire, there will never be more than a discordant mosaic of provincial administrations.

Any such assumption of foreign right to organize them is bitterly rejected by the Arabs. 'We are delighted to be your friends, most grateful for what you have given us, but do, please, remember that we are not British subjects. We should feel more at ease if you were not so disproportionate an ally.' Feisal meant that the touchiness of Arab tribesmen at any suggestion from us in internal affairs was due, not to rational

offence, but to consciousness of material and physical weakness. Their government will have something of a cripple's temper until it has found its feet.

In my supposed capacity of a Syrian I made some sympathetic reference to the executions by Jemal Pasha of the Arab leaders of Damascus. The Sherifs, and those who knew the real history, abhorred the act. The others said: 'But Jemal Pasha published papers showing that these men had sold their country to the French and English. If he had not put them to death, it would have been our duty as Arabs to have done his work.'

The feeling seemed to grow in intensity towards the north. The Harb were less keen than the Juheinah, and the Juheinah less chauvinistic than the Billi. The Billi, I believe, hold back from the Sherif, not because they like the Turk, but because they fear that the Sherif means the British.

Of religious fanaticism I found little trace. The Sherif has refused in round terms to give a religious twist to his rebellion. The tribes know that the Turks are Mohammedans, and think that the Germans are probably true friends of Islam. They know that we are Christians, and that we are their friends. In the circumstances their religion would not be of much use to them, and they have put it aside. 'Christian fights Christian, so why shouldn't Mohammedan do the same? What we want is a Government that speaks Arabic, and will let us live in peace. Also, we hate those Turks.'

## VIII. THE TURKISH HEJAZ FORCES AND THEIR REINFORCEMENT

[Arab Bulletin, 26 November 1916]

Compiled from information in possession of G.H.Q. (E.E.F.).

ON JUNE 9, 1916, THERE WAS IN MEDINA PART OF A battalion of the 129th Regiment, a Mohafiz Alai, the Yemen Mofraza of the Stotzingen Mission, and some train troops, with the fortress gunners of the Medina forts.

When the news of the revolt arrived the Turkish Government sent

down the two battalions of the 130th Regiment which had been for six months at Tartus watching Ruad Island, and parts of Regiments 42 and 55 of the 14th Division intercepted at Aleppo on their way to the Caucasus. Some artillery and technical details were also sent, and such of the units as were below strength were re-made from the Yemen Mofraza, which has apparently been entirely broken up in the process.

This force was named the Hejaz Expeditionary Force, under the supreme command of Jemal Pasha. Fakhri Pasha commands in Medina, and Basri Pasha the El Ula section. Fakhri is a Turk of the pre-German school, with long administrative experience. He was the executive of the Adana massacre of 1909, and the recent affairs at Zeitun and Hajin. Basri was the Turkish Mohafiz of Medina, and a popular official.

*The present composition and distribution of the force appears to be roughly as follows:—*

#### *Medina*

O.C. Abd el-Rahman Bey.

4/131st Regiment. A gendarmerie unit from Aleppo province, of about 600 Turks.

1/129th Regiment.—A nominal battalion of regimental details and drafts. About 700 strong. Probably eighty per cent Turks.

Regiment Camel Corps.—About 500 strong, patrolling to Bir Derwish. Turks.

79th Machine-gun Company.—Four machine-guns; mule transport (pack). Personnel: probably partly Arab.

Fortress Artillery.—Turks. Several masonry forts with old guns of position.

Three Companies of Engineers.—Turks, taken respectively from the 47th, 48th and 49th Divisional Engineers.

#### *Bir Derwish District*

O.C. Ghalib Bey.

1, 2, 3/55th Regiment.—Mostly Turks. Battalions perhaps 800 strong.

2, 3/42nd Regiment.—Mostly Turks. Battalions perhaps 8–900 strong.

3/130th Regiment.—Camel Transport Battalion, mostly Arabs. Two Companies, Mule M.I.—Turks.

Regiment of Camel Corps.—Patrolling to Bir Raha.

One Battery, Camel Mountain Artillery.—22nd Artillery Regiment.

Field-gun Batteries.—?

Aeroplane Section.—Three Aeroplanes, of which two are, probably disabled. A fourth perhaps to come.

#### *Bir Raha District*

O.C. Amin Bey.

1, 2/130th Regiment.—About 700 strong, each containing about thirty per cent Arabs.

Camel Corps.—300 Shammar Arabs.

Company Mule M.I.—

Three Mountain-guns.—

Two Field-guns.—

Wireless Section.—Apparatus on three carts. From them wires are taken to pole twenty-five feet high, 100 yards away.

#### *Lines of Communication Units*

##### *Railway*

Mohafiz Alai.—800 strong.

Regiment Camel Corps.—H.Q. Bueir, with one company and two guns. Company at Abu el-Naam, and one at Bowat (two guns).

##### *El Ula*

One Battalion.—Turks. Perhaps the missing 1/42nd.

Ageyl Camel Corps.—Arabs.

##### *El Wejh*

One Battalion Gendarmes.—800 strong. Turks.

Ageyl Camel Corps.—Arabs.



Total numbers perhaps:

			Dismounted.	Mounted.
Wejh	...	...	800	400
El Ula	...	...	800	300
Railway	...	...	900	600
Bir Raha	...	...	2,000	400
Bir Derwish	...	...	4,500	700
Medina	...	...	1,300	600
			<hr/> 10,300	<hr/> 3,000

Between Medina and Bir Derwish there were about 2,000 camels, and the two battalions at Bir Abbas were allowed 130 camels each for food, water, ammunition and baggage transport. Water was a very small item, as there were local supplies, and men were only given a water-bottle per day.

#### *Possible Reinforcement*

It is possible that Turkish and German opinions on the importance of the Hejaz operations are divergent. The Turks see their national reputation, enhanced by their preliminary successes over us, endangered by the Sherif's continuance. The Germans may think Maan easier to defend than Medina. It is, perhaps, risky to over-estimate the German influence in the Turkish war-council. The Turkish official is as difficult to guide or drive as anyone on earth, and his German advisers, no doubt, have many revolts and obstructions in their way.

Another governing factor must be the carrying capacity of the Hejaz railway. This is a vexed point, requiring exhaustive treatment and full materials, not yet available.

The Turkish army to-day consists of forty-two divisions, and the Medina force. The paper strength of a division is 12,000 rifles, and the actual strength in rifles of an untouched division seldom exceeds 9,000. An engaged division may be anything from 3,000 rifles upwards. Turkey's weakness of reserve prevents her making good her losses. The

total strength of her armies in rifles to-day appears to be less than 350,000, and her depôts are nearly dry. She has been reduced to spreading reports that she has found her population larger than she expected, and that great reserves of man-power are, therefore, available when the moment comes. Unfortunately, much of the force of this new discovery was taken off by her coincident reduction of twelve divisions (which had in 1915 a strength of 114 battalions of 800 men each), to twelve regiments each of three battalions of 800-1,000 men.

The distribution of the Turkish army is now; eighteen divisions against the Russians in Armenia, five in Mesopotamia and Persia, six in Syria, three in Southern Arabia, one at Smyrna, and nine in Europe. Those in Europe used to be concentrated in Thrace and formed a reserve army, till the needs of their allies forced the Turks to scatter one to Bulgaria, two to Galicia, two or three to the Dobruja: so that to-day they have only one in Constantinople, and three or two in the Dardanelles on which to draw for further military efforts.

If Turkey has a strategical reserve to-day, it would appear to be in the Syrian army, the only considerable body of troops not in actual contact with the enemy; and the Syrian army, being under Jemal Pasha is also the most likely to send reinforcements to the Hejaz. In consequence its situation is of direct importance in Hejaz operations.

The military district of the 4th (Syrian) army extends from the Taurus to Medina, and the divisions composing it are the 3rd, 23rd, 27th, 41st, 43rd and 44th. Syria has been split into divisional zones, and each commander made responsible for part of the coast.

In the northern sectors the troops are thickest. From Mersina to Aleppo, Syria is the line of communications for the Southern army of the Caucasus, for Mesopotamia and Persia, as well as for Sinai and Arabia. The railway on which these fronts depend runs very close to the sea and accidents of terrain make it easy to attack. In consequence we have the 23rd Division (two regiments, perhaps 5,000 men in all and mainly Turks) guarding from Mersina to Adana, with its main strength at Tarsus, and the 44th Division (complete, of perhaps 9,000 men, ninety per cent Turks) takes over from it round the head of the Gulf of Alexan-

dretta almost to Aleppo, with its Headquarters at Erzin. Alexandretta itself, and Aleppo, and the main part of Syria, down to the Tripoli-Homs gap, are in the area of the 41st Division (perhaps 8,000 strong, seventy per cent Turks), whose main force is concentrated at Beilan. South of the 41st Division comes the 43rd with an independent regiment (the 67th) in Lebanon. Its duty is to cover Damascus, but we know so little of it that we suspect it is inchoate. It is probably mainly Turk, but the 67th Regiment is largely Arab, and so in the Hauran is a reserve of troops, some of them line battalions, some of them dépôt-troops, sent there no doubt to overawe the Druses, but also to simplify the problem of feeding them. They must be 4,000 or 5,000 strong. In Haifa district was the 27th Division, (8,000 strong, including many Arabs), which has been in movement southward, apparently to relieve the 3rd Division, (6,000 strong, all Turks) in Sinai. The 27th Division used to be the Sinai garrison, and then gave way to the 3rd, which lost about fifty per cent of effectives at Katia, and is perhaps to be rested and repaired in the rich and quiet district about Nazareth.

The term 'strategic reserve', tentatively applied to the Turkish army in Syria alone, is, therefore, seen to be rather illusory, since the Syrian garrison is playing an essential part either in defending the main L. of C. (three divisions) or controlling a restless population (one division, one regiment, and the composite force at Deraa), or opposing the British canal army (one division in line, and one in reserve).

The 27th and 3rd Divisions are indispensable—to the Turks—and can hardly afford to send large drafts to Medina:—even though the weakness of the railway link with Damascus, while the Hejaz needs a daily train, may make it unwise to reinforce them heavily. The force in Lebanon is also necessary, and the Sherif's policy with the Hauran Druses and Arabs should hold the Deraa force in its place. The retention of Divisions 23, 41 and 44, about the Gulf of Alexandretta is dependent on the opinion entertained by the Turkish staff about the necessity for guarding this, the most vulnerable point on its line of communication from the Caucasus, Mesopotamia and Syria—a point where an Allied landing would wreck, at one stroke, all three campaigns. T.E.L.

## IX. SHERIF FEISAL'S ARMY

[Arab Bulletin, 11 December 1916]

AT THE END OF NOVEMBER, FEISAL DECIDED TO FORM a regular infantry force on the lines of that suggested for Sherif Ali by Aziz el-Masri. The battalions were to be composed, not so much of Nomads, as of their fellahs, poor men and slaves. They were to be formed into eight battalions each of 600 men, and by November 28th, several were already over 400 strong. Internal organization consists of 20 men under one reis, and 5 reis (100 men) under each 'Sherif'. Ten 'Sherifs' to each battalion.

The battalions were contributed as follows:

1. Hudtheil (Mecca).
2. Ibn Shefia (Juheinah).
3. Rifaa (Juheinah).
4. Wuld Selim (Harb).
5. Bishawa (Asiris from Wadi Bishah).
6. Ashraf (Juheinah).
7. Wuld Mohammed (Harb).
8. Muretteb of Ageyl and others.

## X. DIARY OF A SECOND JOURNEY

[Arab Bulletin, 26 December 1916]

LEFT YAMBO ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, ABOUT 4.30 p.m., with Abd el-Kerim, Sherif and Emir of the Juheinah, younger brother of Mohammed Ali el-Beidawi. He is the son of a negro woman, very dark, about twenty-six years old, obviously half-African, but energetic, active, and endowed with a humour which is as salacious as it is easy. He is a tremendous rider, doing camel journeys at three times the normal speed, and is strongly anti-Turk. With him there were three or four men, and we had a very rapid and

merry journey. We rode straight over the plain till 7.30 p.m., when we stopped till 9 p.m., eating a little bread and drinking coffee, while Abd el-Kerim and his men played games on each other and exchanged japes. Everything was very free, very good-tempered, and not at all dignified.

After we re-started, an hour's journey brought us to the end of a low range of hills (rock and sand) which cuts off the plain in which Yambo stands from Wadi Yambo. The Bir Said road passes south of this range along the Tihamah; our present road turned up Wadi Agida, a narrow winding sandy valley between the hills. It had flooded lately, and the going was, therefore, good. I think even in normal times a car would get over it. At 11 p.m. we came to the watershed, next an old cistern called only the 'Sebil', on the left hand side of the road. We then galloped down to Nakhl Mubarrek, which we reached at 11.30 p.m.

When we got near, we saw through the palm-trees the flame and smoke of many fires, and the whole valley was full of shouting and rifle shots, and the roaring of camels. We rode past an end of the groves and turned up a narrow street, forced the door of the first empty house we came to, and led our camels inside to hide them while Abd el-Kerim went off quietly down the street towards the noise to find out what was happening. He came back in half-an-hour to say that Feisal had just arrived in the village from Sueig with his camel corps, and that I was to go to see him at once. So we led the camels out and mounted again, and rode down the narrow lane between houses and the wall of a sunk garden on the right, pressing through a solid crowd of Arabs and camels, mixed up in the wildest confusion, and all shouting like mad.

At the end of the lane we came out suddenly on to the bed of Wadi Yambo, as it ran between the palm-groves of Nakhl Mubarrek and Bruka on the one side, and the hills of Wadi Safra on the other. It was a broad open space, very damp, for it had just flooded, with a few tamarisk and thorn trees in it, but now filled from side to side with Feisal's army. There were hundreds of watch-fires burning, with Arabs round them making coffee, or eating, or just sleeping, as well as they could in the confusion of camels. I have never seen so many camels

together, and the mess was indescribable, as they were tied up, or couched here and there all over the camping ground, and more were ever coming up, and the old ones were leaping up to join them, and patrols were going out, and convoys being unloaded, and some dozens of Egyptian mules were bucking all over the middle of the picture.

We shouldered our way through all this din, and made our camels kneel down opposite Sherif Feisal, who was seated on a carpet in the Wadi bed, reading reports and writing orders by the light of a lamp. The night was quite windless. With him was Sherif Sharraf, Kaimmakam of the Imaret and of Taif, his second in command, and Mulud ibn Mukhlus, his Mosul A.D.C. He received me very cordially, and apologized for the accommodation, which was not improved a minute later, when the hay bales of a baggage camel behind Feisal's head became untied, and he, the lamp, Sharraf and myself were temporarily overwhelmed in an avalanche of hay. I sat down with him, and listened to the news, and petitions and complaints and difficulties being brought in and settled before him. The position was, that the Turks, after clearing Zeid out of Wadi Safra, had come forward very fast to Wasta and Bir Said, and were threatening to advance rapidly on Yambo or Nakhl Mubarrek, either to destroy Feisal, or to cut off his sea bases. Feisal's spy system was breaking down, and most wild and contradictory reports were coming in from one side and from another, about the strength of the Turks, and their movements. In the absence of news, he had moved suddenly down here, to watch the Yambo roads, with about 2,000 camel-men, and 2,000 infantry, and had got in, an hour before I came.

We sat on the rug talking till 4.30 a.m. It got very cold and the damp of the Wadi rose up through the carpet and soaked our cloaks, and a white mist collected slowly over the whole camp, which gradually became quiet as the men and the camels all went to sleep, and the fires burnt out. Immediately north of us, rising out of the mist and quite clear in the moonlight, was the eastern end of Jebel Rudhwa, which looks even more steep and rugged close by than it does from the sea. At about 4.30 Feisal decided that we should go to sleep, so we ate half-a-

dozen dates, and stretched out on the very wet carpet on which we had been sitting. The Bishah men came up and spread their cloaks over him as soon as he had dropped asleep.

At 5.30 we got up (it was too cold to do anything else) and lit a fire of palm-ribs to warm ourselves. Messengers were still coming in from all sides, and the camp was not far off panic. Feisal decided to move then, partly to avoid the strong probability of being washed out next rain, and partly to occupy his men's minds. So everybody began to mount at once, and drew off to right and left, leaving a path for Feisal to ride up. He came along on a horse with Sherif Sharraf a pace behind him, and then his standard bearer (a splendid wild Arab with many luxuriant plaits of hair) on a camel, and behind him all the mob of Sherifs and sheikhs and household slaves—and myself—pell-mell. There was about 800 in the bodyguard that morning.

He rode about up and down, looking for a camping ground, and finally stopped on the further bank of a little side-wadi (the road to Yambo), that runs down into Wadi Yambo from the west, just north of Nakhl Mubarrek village. On the south bank of this wadi (in whose bed I made a landing ground), was a raised slope, backed by some little rocky knolls, and beneath them Feisal pitched his camp. There were about ten tents with Headquarters, and the Egyptians had theirs, too, so that the place soon looked business-like.

We stayed here two days, most of which I spent in Feisal's tent, and so I got a certain experience of his manner of command. The circumstances were very difficult, and the morale of his men was obviously suffering heavily under the scare reports brought in, and the defection of the northern Harb. Feisal was fighting all these two days to keep up their spirits. He is accessible to any man who stands outside his tent till he is noticed, and never cuts short a petitioner. He hears every case, and if he does not settle it himself, calls one of his staff to settle it for him. His patience was extreme, and his self-control rather wonderful. When Zeid's men came in to try and explain away the really shameful story of their surprise and retreat, he rallied them gently, and jested at them, chaffing them for having done this or that, for having inflicted



such losses or suffered so much. He has got a very rich tenor voice, and uses it carefully in making speeches to his men, which he does in the broadest of Bedouin dialects. I heard him speak to the Rifai sheikhs, when he sent them forward to picket the plain this side of Bir el-Fagir. He told them quite quietly that the Turks were coming on, and that it was their duty to hold them up, and give God a victory, adding that he hoped they would not go to sleep. The older men particularly were enthusiastic, and after saying that God would give him the victory, and then two victories, decided that his life would be prolonged, to enable him to accumulate an unprecedented number of victories.

Generally speaking, I thought the spirits of the infantry rather good, and those of the Juheinah less firm; neither party was anything like so cheerful as the Harb and Juheinah had been in Hamra a month before.

In the afternoon I walked round Nakhl Mubarrek and Bruka, which are pleasant little mud villages, with very narrow streets, built on high earth mounds encircling their palm-gardens. Nakhl lies to the north, and Bruka 150 yards south of it across a thorny valley. I think each has about 300 to 600 houses, but it was very difficult to judge. The earth mounds round the villages were fifty feet high in places, and formed from the stuff dug out of the gardens, which are divided up into narrow plots by fences of palm-leaves, or by mud walls, and are watered from two or three narrow streams of sweet water running through them. The palms, very regularly planted and well cared for, are the main crop, but between the trunks are grown barley, radishes, marrows, cucumbers and henna. The villages in the upper part of Wadi Yambo have grapes.

The views from the little knolls behind our camp were very fine. Rudhwa bore N. 20° E., or the S.E. end of it did, and it seemed to be about fifteen miles away. The whole time I was there, one part of it or another was wrapped in rain clouds, and it formed the most striking part of every outlook. Wadi Yambo itself is a broad tree-covered plain, relieved by odd-coloured and odd-shaped rocks sticking out of its bed at intervals. It seemed to be about two miles wide, and runs up 40° E. of N. to the fork, where the Bugaa branch leaves the main stream. Bugaa is half Harb and half Juheinah. Mjeil, Madsus, Ain Ali

and Shaatha are wholly Harb; the rest of the valley seems to be Juheinah. Bir Said is Harb, and Hafira is Juheinah. All the villages in the main bed of Wadi Yambo are on its northern side. The water flows in little stone-lined channels underground from springs to villages.

Beyond the fork of the valley it was obvious that the country rose rapidly and got very hilly. The district behind Buwat is very high. Buwat itself stands on the watershed of Wadi Yambo and Wadi Hamdh, and is about twelve miles west of the station of Buwat.

Between Bruka and Bir Said is a long hollow valley, with an imperceptible watershed somewhere in the middle of it, at Bir el-Fagir, a well surrounded by thick groves of acacia and tamarisk. On the left of this plain or valley is the great massif of hills bounding the western edge of Wadi Safra, and on the right is Gebel Fijeij. Towards Bir Said are dunes of some height.

Wadi Yambo itself runs first north and then west of Fijeij, to Milha and the sea near Masahali. It has no more sweet water in it, from Nakhl Mubarrek to the *themail* at Masahali. Its right bank is made up of the low range of hills out of which Wadi Agida flows.

After the landing ground was finished I decided to come back at once to Yambo, to instruct the aeroplanes on the ground they would have to reconnoitre. So at 9.15 p.m. on December 4, I left Feisal's tent, on his own camel, on which I had also come. He paid £30 for it and it is a magnificent animal. Because of a scare of Turkish patrols we left the Agida road, and marched across the heads of its tributaries from the north by a very good and easy hard-surfaced road, into Wadi Messarid, which led us down into the maritime plain at El-Zuweidr, an area that was, apparently, once cultivated. Bedr ibn Shefia rode with me, and we stopped nowhere. Reached Yambo 3.30 a.m., very tired after three sleepless nights, and constant alarms and excursions during the days.

## XI. GENESIS OF THE HEJAZ REVOLT

Sidi Feisal's account of the genesis of the Arab rising, as communicated in conversation to Captain T. E. Lawrence in December, 1916, was briefly as follows:

IT WAS FIRST IMAGINED BY HIS BROTHER ABDULLAH, who reckoned that the Hejaz was capable of withstanding Turkey, with the aid of the Syrian and Mesopotamian armies, and our diplomatic help; but the scheme was put off on Feisal's representing that Turkey was too strong for them. When the great war broke out, Sherif Husein decided that this was his opportunity, and sent Feisal to Damascus to prepare the ground for a rising in Syria. The latter found the time inopportune, and reported to his father that further delay was necessary. Abdullah told his father that Feisal was afraid, and the revolt was ordered for June. The Sherif had been holding the Bedouin in for some months, and telling them not to move till ordered.

## XII. THE ARAB ADVANCE ON WEJH

[Arab Bulletin, 6 February 1917]

WHEN THE DEADLOCK IN THE MEDINA-HAMRA area declared itself in October, 1916, the new idea of an attack on the Turkish rear at El-Ala, by way of Wejh, was brought forward. The situation in the South was that the Turks held Medina too strongly for direct attack by the Arab forces, and that Feisal held the Kheif-Milif hills too strongly for direct attack by the Turkish forces. In the rear, almost blockaded in Rabugh, lay Sidi Ali profitlessly with his army.

Feisal decided to carry out the northern expedition to Wejh, and to do it himself. He, therefore, brought up Sidi Zeid to Wadi Safra, and transferred to him the whole of his Harb forces and his Southern Juh-einah. He then withdrew to Wadi Yambo to organize a force of Northern Juheinah for the march on Wejh.

While he was in Wadi Yambo in early December the unexpected happened. The Arabs under Sidi Zeid became slack and left a by-road near Khalis unguarded. A Turkish mounted infantry patrol pushed up along it into Wadi Safra near Kheif. The front line of Arabs, hearing news of this enemy six miles in their rear, broke with a rush to rescue their families and property in the threatened villages. Zeid's main body followed suit. Zeid himself fled at top pace to Yambo; and the astonished Turks occupied Hamra and Bir Said unopposed.

This situation made Feisal's march north impossible. He moved into Nakhl Mubarak with his forces and the still-trembling remnant of Zeid's army, and after a few excited days fought a long range action against a strong Turkish reconnaissance. In this he found his troops lacking in many respects: his centre and right wing held and repulsed the enemy; the left wing (Juheinah) retired suddenly behind his centre, without hostile pressure. He suspected treachery and ordered a general retreat on Yambo, the next water supply. The defaulting left wing refused to retire, put up an independent stubborn resistance against the Turks for another twenty-four hours, and then rejoined Feisal at Yambo. It explained that the retirement during the action was to find an opportunity for brewing a cup of coffee undisturbed.

The army of Sidi Ali at Rabugh was stirred into life by these events and began a sudden advance of its own towards Bir ibn Hassani, in spite of Feisal's appeals that it should wait till he was in a position to support it by a thrust from Yambo. Ali persisted in his movement, and Feisal eventually collected what men he could and hurried out to Nakhl Mubarak again. He was preparing a stroke against Kheif and Hamra to synchronize with Ali's arrival at Bir ibn Hassani when he got news that Ali's forces had fallen back sixty miles on hearing a (false) report of the defection of the Subh. He, therefore, retired again, in a very bad temper, to Nakhl Mubarak.

The move on Wejh now appeared not merely the convincing means of securing a siege of Medina, but an urgent necessity if a Turkish advance on Mecca was to be prevented. Colonel Wilson came up to Yambo and pressed the point on Sherif Feisal, who agreed entirely, but pointed out

that the Rabugh force had proved hollow, and that the Turks in Hamra were open to strike at Rabugh or Yambo as they pleased. Now that Zeid was discredited, and Ali shown a broken reed, he could not risk leaving the area himself. In the circumstances Colonel Wilson gave Feisal his personal assurance that the Rabugh garrison (with British naval help) would be capable of resisting any Turkish attack until Feisal had occupied Wejh. There was no means of giving force to this assurance, but it seemed a reasonable and necessary risk to take, since without it Feisal would not have moved north. Colonel Wilson strengthened his position a few days later, by sending Feisal direct orders from the Sherif of Mecca to proceed to Wejh at once.

The other Arab factor in our hands was Sherif Abdullah with an untarnished reputation and a force in being north-east of Medina, an area of very secondary military importance. It was pointed out to Feisal how effective Abdullah might be made if he was moved to Wadi Ais, a natural fortress about 100 kilometres above Medina on the railway line. He would there be astride the Medina Lines of Communication, and no Turkish advance towards Mecca, Yambo, or even Rabugh would be possible till he had been dislodged, and to dislodge him troops would have to be withdrawn from Ghayir and Hamra since the coincident Sinai push of the E.E.F. made reinforcements from the north improbable. Feisal saw the point, and sent off Raja ibn Khuluwi at once to Abdullah with the scheme.

In view, however, of the situation at Rabugh, it seemed to Colonel Wilson that Feisal's move on Wejh should be undertaken as soon as possible. Preparations were, therefore, made for the start, before a reply had arrived from Abdullah. Feisal was very nervous during this period. The operation involved a flank march of about 200 miles parallel to the Turkish communications, by an inferior fighting force, leaving its base (Yambo) entirely undefended, and evacuating its only possible defensive position (Wadi Yambo) in the face of an enemy force of nearly divisional strength in Wadi Safra, not thirty miles away across easy country. The manoeuvre was only made possible at all by the absolute command of the sea and the ungrudging co-operation in transport of

ammunition and supplies afforded Feisal by the S.N.O. Red Sea Patrol. The situation at Yambo appeared likely to be so insecure that all possible rifles and ammunition were embarked from the town store-houses before we left.

Sherif Abdullah fortunately fell in with the Wadi Ais scheme, and said he would arrive there on January 11. Feisal, therefore, fixed January 20 as a provisional date for his attack on Wejh. Actually, Abdullah was not able to reach Wadi Ais till January 17, and Feisal did not reach Wejh till January 25.

The occupation of Wejh is of importance, since it means a prolongation of the Arab front along the Hejaz railway by rather more than 200 miles, the accession to the Sherif's cause of the Billi, and later of the Beni Atiyah and Huweitat. Its direct military value is that it is the only possible base for operations against El-Ala, which is the vital point of railway communication between Syria and Medina, and a base for the future.

Sherif Abdullah's occupation of Wadi Ais rendered possible Feisal's move north to Wejh, and Abdullah's occupation was indirectly secured by the operations at Arish and Rafah.

### XIII. THE SHERIFAL NORTHERN ARMY

[Arab Bulletin, 6 February 1917]

**F**EISAL MOVED AWAY FROM OWAIS (SIXTEEN MILES north of Yambo), towards Wejh, with the following force:

#### *Juheinah Tribal Volunteers*

Contingent.	Mounted.	Infantry.	Officer Commanding.
Ashraf	270	296	Sherif Mohammed Ali Abu Sharrain.
Gufa	690	854	Sherif Abd el-Kerim.

Contingent.	Mounted.	Infantry.	Officer Commanding.
Erwa	244	298	Sherif Jabar el-Aiaishi, Jera- bih ibn Rubaia, Maazi.
Zueida	260	80	Ali Seyyid, Mifleh el-Han- sha and Thali el-Urfi.
Beni Ibrahim	916	800	Mohammed ibn Jebbara, Abd el-Rahman, Abu Ra- geiba.
Rifaa	261	836	Audah ibn Zuweid.
Sinan	150	100	
	<hr/> 2,791 <hr/>	<hr/> 3,264 <hr/>	
<i>Harb Tribesmen</i>			
Wuld			
Mohammed	176	212	Salih el-Jiddah.
<i>Other Units</i>			
Ibn Shefia's battalion.	95	400	Mohammed ibn Shefia.
Ageyl and Ateibah bodyguard.	800	400	Abdullah ibn Dakhil, Sherif Ahmed ibn Hadhaa.
Mule Mounted Infantry.	100		Mulud ibn Mukhlus.
Mountain Battery.	4	2.95 quick- firing guns.	Rasim.
Machine-guns.	10 (= 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ com- panies.)		Abdullah.
Near Wejh Feisal was joined by:			
<i>Juheinah Tribesmen</i>			
Marawin	800	500	Saad el-Ghaneim. Mohammed el-Ghaneim.



Contingent.	Mounted.	Infantry.	Officer Commanding.
Hameida Samarra Foweida	400	308	Murzuk el-Tihaimi.

H.M.S. 'Hardinge' transported to Wejh:

150 Bisha police	Sheikh Aamr.
450 Juheinah infantry, mainly belong to Ibn Shefia's unit.	Salih ibn Shefia.

This makes in the whole northern army, 5,162 mounted men, and 5,284 infantry (total 10,446 men), with four quick-firing guns and ten machine-guns.

The forces left in the Yambo area by Feisal comprised the following:

*Anezah*

Wuld Suleiman	550	Sent to Wadi Ais.
---------------	-----	-------------------

*Juheinah*

Beni Kelb	250	Bowat.
-----------	-----	--------

*Harb, (Beni Salim.)*

		Wadi Safrah.
		Officer Commanding.
Subh	1,200	Abd el-Mayin ibn Aasai, Suleiman el-Teiah, Nassar ibn Wahis.
Sumeidat	300	Assaf (Paramount of all Beni Salim.)
Mahamid	600	Hetaihet.
Hawazim	1,300	Selman; Jebr ibn Hemeid; Mastur ibn Aiyj.
Dawahir	300	Ibn Balud.
Seraha	400	Suleiman; Afnan.
Beni Amr	500	Nasir ibn Derwish.
Sakharna	800	Abu Bekr ibn Motlog; Naji ibn Rubia.
Fadhallah	200	Feisal ibn Ahmed.

		Officer Commanding.
Rahalah	900	Raba; Atiet Allah; Mohammed ibn Na- fia.
Dhikara	300	Mabruk.
Radadah	600	Barakat.
Hejela	550	Sheteiwi.

*In Yambo*

500 Hudheil and a few Bishah.

In all, about 8,250 men.

Of the above force, since the Turkish occupation of Wadi Safrah, only about sixty per cent could be counted on as effective, and some large contingents were cut off from communication with Yambo. They were handed over to Sherif Sharaf, with orders to do what he could to get them together again. A few of the Hawazim and Sheikh Khallaf had surrendered to the Turks, but the remainder (about ninety-six per cent) withdrew into their hills with their rifles, and stood on the defensive waiting orders; or, if they were on the Turkish L. of C., carried out raids on camel convoys and local posts.

T.E.L.

#### XIV. FEISAL'S ORDER OF MARCH

[Arab Bulletin, 6 February 1917]

(i). *Yambo to Um Lej*

FROM OWAIS, FEISAL MOVED TO AKHDAR (WATER), and thence to Nubt (water), and so to Um Lej. He took five days over the journey, which is one of only eighty miles, and experienced great difficulty for lack of water. I was not able, owing to difficulties of the local situation at Yambo, to travel this stretch with the army, and can give no details of the route.

The troops were given six days rations, and ordered to carry two gallons of water per man. The order of march was that the force was divided into nine sections, each under a Sherif or sheikh of importance,

and instructed to march separately to Um Lej, and concentrate there. Actually there proved to be no water at Um Lej, and so Feisal camped at Bir el-Waheidi, five miles north-east of the town. He reached there on January 14, and in the next four days was gradually joined by his other contingents, who settled down at all available water-holes in the district.

(ii). *Um Lej to Wejh*

The more serious part of the march was that from Um Lej to Wejh. The best road for camels is up the coast, to Wadi Dhulm, and then to Abu Zereibat for water. The drawback to the road is that the sixty miles between Semna and Abu Zereibat have no permanent water. For this reason an interior road, from Semna to Khuf, Towala and Abu Zereibat is usually chosen, as well-water exists at each station. Between Yambo and Wejh there is no single spring of running water, and the wells depend intimately on the rainfall, which for the last three years has been almost nil. In consequence, little water is anywhere obtainable, and the supply of forage presents serious difficulties. There is almost no grazing (and in any case a worked camel cannot subsist by grazing alone), and the price of dried hay has reached unprecedented prices. A particular local measure of hay, calculated to be sufficient for a riding camel for one day, now costs six shillings and eightpence. Feisal only pays £6 a month camel-hire, and in consequence, all the animals are underfed, and quite a number died along our march, simply from physical weakness. The Arabs care for them so far as possible, and there is little sickness among them; but their carrying capacity is impaired, and their number is also limited. For the transport of his army of 4,000 camel corps, and 4,000 infantry (the army is organized on a basis of rikab and redif to each camel), mountain-guns, machine-guns, and mule mounted-infantry, Feisal had 380 baggage camels, in all. He carried eight days food, thirty-six hours water, 500 rounds of 2.95 ammunition and a small reserve of S.A.A., over the 100,000 rounds of the machine-gun companies, on these 380 camels.

It will be understood from the above, that the material needs of an Arab army (even when of the size and complexity of Feisal's), are much

below that of a Turkish or European force. Feisal's mountain-battery, in the hands of its Egyptian personnel, required 360 camels for its proper transport. Since the Egyptians have been replaced by Arabs, the battery has moved with thirty-two camels for two-day marches, and on this expedition of fourteen days found less than eighty sufficient. The same quantity of ammunition was carried in both cases.

At Bir el-Waheidi Feisal heard that casual rain-pools had formed at two places on the coast road, and decided to take that road to Abu Zereibat with his own guard and three other sections of the army. He ordered the rest to march by Khuff and Towala. The local Arabs (Musa Juheinah) on whom we had to rely for local information and as guides proved most unreliable. They were never able to say what the yield of any well really would be, or where and how far off the wells were. The numbers of Feisal's armies are much in excess of anything which tribal warfare has conceived, and the Juheinah—being uneducated—have no unit of time smaller than the day, or of distance longer than the span and shorter than the stage (from six to sixteen hours march, according to your wish and camel), and cannot realise a number larger than the digits. Inter-communication between units of the Arab forces is often hindered by there being no person in a force who can read and write. In the circumstances a great deal of delay, confusion, and actual danger for lack of water and food occurred on our march, which would have been obviated had time allowed of previous reconnaissance of the route. The animals were without food for two and a half days, and the army marched the last fifty miles on half a gallon of water per man and no food. This did not seem in any way to affect the spirits of the men, who trotted gaily into Wejh singing songs and executing sham charges; nor did it affect in any way their speed or energy. Feisal said, however, that another thirty-six hours of the same conditions would have begun to tell on them.

T.E.L.

## XV. NEJD NEWS

[Arab Bulletin, 6 February 1917]

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT CENTRAL Arabian matters, past and present, is based on notes of a conversation with Sherif Feisal.

'About five years ago Ibn Saud began to move the people of Western Nejd against the Meccans. He sent Seyyids and preachers among the former, and taught that the people of Mecca were *kufar* and quite intolerable in such Holy Places. He won over to his side (by various arguments) some of the Buqum and Sebai, and threatened Taif. This stirred up the Sherif of Mecca, who took effective counter-measures. In consequence Saad ibn Saud was sent down to arrange terms of peace. By mediation all Wadi Dawasir (to the point where it becomes Wadi Ranyah) was recognized to be Ibn Saud's, and Wadis Kharmah and Bishah and Ranyah were confirmed to the Sherif. Ibn Saud was recognized as overlord of all the Kahtan, and the Sherif as overlord of the Ateibah. The trouble about the Ateibah is that they are a Hejaz stock, recently moved into Nejd. Geographically they should be Ibn Saud's, but by origin and custom they are Sherifian. Two years ago Ibn Saud again got active, and sent agents among the Ateibah and other tribes. So Sherif Abdullah went out over the whole dira, further than ever before to the East, and received again the allegiance of the Ateibah.'

Feisal regards Ibn Saud as very powerful, but at home only; for his forces are not organized, and he cannot move abroad in great strength. I noticed, as before, among the Hejaz Arabs and their leaders strong distrust and dislike of Wahabi principles and sectaries.

Feisal is informed that 300 Turks with two mountain-guns, have been put under Ibn Rashid's orders in Hail. They are unpopular, and local disturbances in Hail recently ended in the deaths of two of them.

Persistent rumours are current amongst the Ageyl of a quarrel between Sheikh Jabir and Ibn Saud, in which Jabir was killed. The rumours originated apparently in Jebel Shammar.

The Senha section of the Qahtan are wild. A cord is knotted about the

necks of young lads, and not removed till they have killed a man in battle.

## XVI. WITH THE NORTHERN ARMY

[Arab Bulletin, 15 February 1917]

The following are excerpts from a Report made by Captain T. E. LAWRENCE, to Lt.-Colonel WILSON on January 8, 1917.

### *Route Notes*

ON JANUARY 2, 1917, I LEFT YAMBO AND RODE across the plain to the mouth of Wadi Agida in five hours. From the mouth of Wadi Agida to the watershed into the Wadi Yambo basin was one hour, and thence to Nakhl Mubarak was one hour; all done at four miles an hour walk. The lowest third of the ascent of Wadi Agida was over sand: soft, slow going. The upper parts were harder and better: the divide was low and easy, and it gave at once to the eastward, on to a broad open valley, coming from the left with only very low hills on each side (Jebel Agida?), down which the road curved gently into Nakhl Mubarak. The 'Sebil' stands about 400 yards east of the watershed.

The road down to Nakhl looked very beautiful to-day. The rains have brought up a thin growth of grass in all the hollows and flat places. The blades, of a very tender green, shoot up between all the stones, so that looked at from a little height and distance there is a lively mist of pale green here and there over the surfaces of the slate-blue and brown-red rocks. In places the growth was quite strong, and the camels of the army are grazing on it.

In Nakhl Mubarak I found Feisal encamped in tents: he himself was in his private tent, getting ready to go out to his reception. I stayed with him that day, while rumours came in that the Turkish force had evacuated Wadi Safra. One reported that from Bir Sheriufi to Bir Derwish was one great camp, and that its units were proceeding to Medina; another had seen a great force of camelmen and infantry ride East past

Kheif yesterday. We decided to send out a feeler towards Hamra, to get news.

On January 3, I took thirty-five Mahamid and rode over a dull tamarisk- and thorn-grown plain past Bir Faqir (not seen) to Bir Wasit, which is the old Abu Khalaat of my first trip. We waited there till sunset, and then went to Bir Murra, left our camels with ten of the men, and the rest of us climbed up the hills north of the Haj road up to Jebel Dhifran, which was painful, for the hills are all of knife-like strata which are turned on edge, and often run in straight lines from crest to valley. It gives you abundance of broken surface but no sound grips, as the strata are so minutely cracked that almost any segment will come away from its socket in your hand.

The top of Dhifran was cold and misty. At dawn we disposed ourselves in crevices of the rocks, and at last saw three bell tents beneath us to the right, behind a spur at the head of the pass, 300 yards away. We could not get round to them to get a low view, so put a few bullets through their top. This turned out a crowd of Turks from all directions. They leaped into trenches and rifle pits each side of the road, and potting them was very difficult. I think they suffered some loss, but I could not be sure. They fired in every direction except towards us, and the row in the narrow valley was so awful that I expected to see the Hamra force turn out. As the Turks were already ten to our one this might have made our getting away difficult, so we crawled back and rushed down into a valley, almost on top of two very scared Turks, who may have been outposts or may have been at their private morning duty. They were the most ragged men I have ever seen, bar a British tramp, and surrendered at once. We took them with us, and bolted off down the valley for another 500 yards. From there we put a few shots into the Turks, which seemed to check them, and so got off gently to Bir Murra by 6.30 a.m. The prisoners could speak only Turkish, so we mounted them and raced up to Nakhl to find an interpreter. They said it was the 5th Coy. of the 2/55th Regiment which was posted on Dhifran, the rest of the battalion and two companies of the first battalion being at Hamra village. The other companies of the 1/55th were guarding the Derb el-



Khayaa from Hamra to Bir Ibn Hassani; 3/55th in Bir Derwish; O.C. 55th Regiment, Tewfik Bey.

At Nakhl Mubarak I found letters from Captain Warren saying that Zeid was still in Yambo, and that the 'Dufferin' would wait in Sherm Yambo till I came. As Feisal was just starting for Owais, I changed my camel and rode down with him and the army to the head of Wadi Messarid by 3 p.m. The order of march was rather splendid and barbaric. Feisal in front, in white; Sharaf on his right in red headcloth and henna dyed tunic and cloak; myself on his left in white and red; behind us three banners of purple silk, with gold spikes; behind them three drummers playing a march, and behind them again, a wild bouncing mass of 1,200 camels of the bodyguard, all packed as closely as they could move, the men in every variety of coloured clothes, and the camels nearly as brilliant in their trappings, and the whole crowd singing at the tops of their voices a war song in honour of Feisal and his family. It looked like a river of camels, for we filled up the Wadi to the tops of its banks, and poured along in a quarter of a mile long stream.

At the mouth of Wadi Messarid I said good-bye to Feisal and raced down the open plain to Yambo by 6 p.m. I was riding Feisal's own splendid camel, and so managed to do the twenty-two miles fairly easily. To my great relief I found the 'Dufferin' had already left for Rabugh with Zeid, and so I was saved a further ten miles' march to Sherm Yambo.

#### *Arab Forces*

The troops in Nakhl Mubarak were mostly camel corps. There were very many—according to Feisal's figures, over 6,000—but their camps were spread over miles of the Wadi and its tributaries, and I could not manage to see all of them. Those I did see were quiet, and I thought in fair spirits. Some of them have now served six months or more, and these have lost their enthusiasm but gained experience in exchange. They still preserve their tribal instinct for independence of order, but they are curbing their habit of wasting ammunition, have achieved a sort of routine in matters of camping and marching, and when the Sherif

approaches near they fall into line and make the low bow and sweep of the arm to the lips which is the official salute. They do not oil their guns—they say because they then clog with sand, and they have no oil handy—but the guns are most of them in fair order, and some of the men know how to shoot. They are becoming separate but coherent units under their sheikhs, and attendance is more regular than it was, as their distance from home increases. Further, they are becoming tempered to the idea of leaving their own diras, and Feisal hopes to take nearly all to Wejh with him. As a mass they are not formidable, since they have no corporate spirit or discipline, or mutual confidence. Man by man they are good: I would suggest that the smaller the unit that is acting, the better will be its performance. A thousand of them in a mob would be ineffective against one fourth their number of trained troops: but three or four of them, in their own valleys and hills, would account for a dozen Turkish soldiers. When they sit still they get nervous, and anxious to return home. Feisal himself goes rather to pieces in the same conditions. When, however, they have plenty to do, and are riding about in small parties tapping the Turks here and there, retiring always when the Turks advance, to appear in another direction immediately after, then they are in their element, and must cause the enemy not only anxiety, but bewilderment. The mule mounted infantry company is very promising. They have got Mulud, an ex-cavalry officer, training them, and already make a creditable appearance. The machine-gun sections were disappointing. They say that the Egyptian volunteers are improving these and the artillery details.

### *Camp Life*

The camp routine at H.Q., is much as follows.—At 5 a.m. the Army 'Imam' gets on to the best hill-top and calls to prayer. He has an astonishing voice, and wakes up every man and animal in the camp. Immediately after him Feisal's private Imam calls gently and musically by his tent. A few minutes later a cup of sweet coffee turns up, for each of us (Feisal has five slaves), and at 6 a.m. or a little later we go to breakfast with Feisal in his tent, where he has two modern, but not bad

carpets, and a delightful old Baluch prayer rug. Breakfast in favourable moments may include Mecca cakes and cooked dhurra besides dates: after breakfast two little glasses of sweet tea are produced for each of us. From after breakfast till 8 a.m. Feisal works with his secretary, or discusses things privately in his tent with important people. At 8 a.m. he gives audience in his diwan tent, which is furnished with two bad *kilims*. The routine is for him to sit at the end of it, on one side, and callers or petitioners sit in front of the tent in a half circle, until he calls them up to him. All questions are settled very summarily, and nothing is left over till later. At 11.30 a.m. he rises, and walks back to his living tent, where a little later we collect for lunch. Lunch again, on fortunate days, consists of several dishes: stewed thorn-buds, beans or lentils, with bread, and afterwards rice or honey cakes. They eat with fingers or spoons, as pleases them. After lunch comes short delay of talk, while coffee and sweet tea turn up. Then till 2 p.m. Feisal writes, or dictates letters, or sleeps. From 2 p.m. till 4.30 p.m. he again sits in the reception tent and disposes of the afternoon cases. From 4.30 to sunset (5 p.m.) he often walks about, or sits outside and talks to a few chiefs. From 5 till 6 p.m. he gives private audience in his living tent to necessary people, and discusses the night's reconnaissance and duties, for most field work is done in the dark. About 6 p.m. comes the evening meal, like lunch, but with large fragments of sheep crowning the rice heap. After it comes intermittent glasses of sugared tea till bed time, which may not be till late hours. He sees all sorts of people at this time; his servants bring them in one by one, according to their business. If there is not much doing, he sends out for some local sheikh, and discusses with him the country round about, roads, tribal histories, etc., or simply tells us stories of what he saw in Syria, Turkish secret history, or family affairs.

#### *Feisal's Table Talk*

Talking one day about the Yemen, as they call anything south of Mecca and Jiddah, Feisal remarked on the great docility and reasonableness of the Southern tribes, compared with the Harb, Juheinah and Ateibah of

the North. He said that no Arabs of his acquaintance were so easily to hold and to rule. To imprison an officer, his sheikh had only to knot a thin string about his neck and state his sentence, and the man would henceforward follow him about with protestations of innocence and appeals to be set at liberty. Another good custom is that of naming boy or girl children after a favoured guest. They then belong literally to their name-father, who can dispose their actions as he pleases, to the exclusion of parental authority; they even incur their part-responsibility of the blood feuds of the name-parent. He was down south between Taif and Birk and inland up to Ebhah for months, and says that now whole tribes of boys are called Feisal, and that, over them and indirectly over their fathers, he has wide personal influence. Particularly he spent four months fortifying Muhail for the Turks and made great friends of Suleiman ibn Ali and his family. He says that, given ten days leave, he would undertake to raise every fighting man in Asir against Muhieddin. Ebhah he says is not formidable to an attacking force with a battery of field-guns. The present bar on action is that Nasir is not weighty enough to counterpoise the Idrisi. The tribes all believe that Idrisi would egg on his friendly sheikhs to attack them in the rear, if they moved openly against the Turks. The presence of Feisal or Abdullah would allay these fears.

Feisal says that Abdullah, though quick when he does move, is rather luxurious in taste and inclined to be lazy.

Stotzingen told Feisal in Damascus that, from the Yemen, arms and ammunition were to be shipped across to Abyssinia, and an anti-foreign war begun in that country. He himself was going afterwards to German East Africa.

Frobenius (calling himself Abd el-Kerim Pasha) turned up in Jiddah one morning by sea from Wejh soon after war had begun. Feisal was in Jiddah, and headed him off from Mecca. British naval activity dissuaded him from going on further south. Feisal, therefore, got him a boat, and gave him a letter of recommendation, and sent him back north again. When he got to Rabugh, however, Hussein Mubeirik took suspicion of him and locked him up in the fort. Frobenius had some

difficulty in getting out, and made great complaints of his treatment when he got back to Syria.

In March, 1916, Jemal Pasha took Feisal to a cinema in Damascus. The star film showed the Pyramids, with the Union Jack on top, and beneath them, Australians beating the Egyptian men and raping the women, and, in the foreground, an Egyptian girl in an attitude of supplication. The second scene showed a desert, with camel-convoys and a Turkish infantry battalion marching on for ever and ever. The third scene returned to the Pyramids with a sudden appearance of the Ottoman Army in review order, the killing of the Australians and the surrender of General Maxwell, the joy of Egypt, the tearing down of the British flag from the Pyramids, and its replacement by the Turkish flag. Feisal said to Jemal: 'Why go on troubling my father and myself for recruits for your army if this film is true?' Jemal said: 'Well, you know it encourages the people. We do not expect or try to conquer Egypt yet. Our policy is to hold the British forces there with the least cost to ourselves; and Germany has promised us that the last act of the war shall be the conquest of Egypt by Germany and its restoration to the Ottoman Empire. On these terms I agreed to join her in arms.'

Oppenheim came to see Feisal in Constantinople in early 1915. He said he wanted to make rebellions. Feisal asked of what and why? Oppenheim said there were to be rebellions of Moslems against Christians. Feisal said the idea was sound. Where did he propose to start them? Oppenheim said, 'everywhere'—in India, Egypt, the Sudan, Java, Abyssinia, North Africa. Feisal said they might consider India first. There was the technical difficulty of lack of arms. Oppenheim said that would be put right by a German-Turk expedition into Persia. He asked if the Sherif would be prepared to co-operate with the Indian Moslem societies. Feisal said his father would want to know whether, afterwards, the Indian Moslems would be independent and supreme, or would Hindus rule them, or India fall to another European Power? Oppenheim said he had no idea: that it was previous to think so far ahead. Feisal said he was afraid his father would want to know all the same. Oppenheim said, 'Very well, how about Egypt? We can arrange to give

your family office there, when it is conquered.' Feisal quoted the Koran to the disparagement of Egyptians, and said that he had lately been in Egypt, and had been offered the crown by the Nationalist party. (This took place in Piraeus.) Egyptians were weather-cocks, with no political principle except dissatisfaction, and intent only on pleasure and money getting. Any Egyptian who talked of raising a rebellion in Egypt was trying to touch you for something on account. Oppenheim said, 'Well then, the Sudan?' Feisal said, 'Yes, you are right. There is in the Sudan material to cause a real rebellion: but do you know the Sudan?' Oppenheim said, 'Why?' Feisal said, 'They are ignorant negroes, armed with broad-bladed spears, bows and shields. He, who would try to stir them up against the English and their rifles and machine-guns, is no good Moslem. The men, however, are sound material. Give me arms, money and the command of the Red Sea for about six weeks, and I shall be Governor-General of the Sudan.' Oppenheim has hardly spoken to him since.

In January, 1915, Yasim, Ali Riza, Abd el-Ghani, and others approached the Sherif of Mecca and suggested a military rebellion in Syria. The Sherif sent Feisal up to report. He found Divisions 25, 35 and 36 ready to revolt, but public opinion less ready, and a general opinion in military circles that Germany would win the war quite rapidly. He went to Constantinople, and waited till the Dardanelles was in full blast. He then came back to Damascus, judging it a possible moment; but he found the well disposed divisions broken up, and his supporters scattered. So he suggested to his father that they delay till England had been properly approached, and Turkey had suffered crippling losses, or until an Allied landing had been effected at Alexandretta.

## XVII. SYRIA: THE RAW MATERIAL

[Arab Bulletin, 12 March 1917]

Fragmentary notes written early in 1915, but not circulated.

**G**EOGRAPHICALLY, SYRIA IS MUCH PARCELLED OUT. The first and greatest longitudinal division is made by the mountains, which run like a rugged spine north and south close to the sea, and shut off the peoples of the coast from those of the interior. Those of the coast speak a different Arabic, differently intoned; they live in different houses, eat different food, and gain their living differently. They speak of the 'interior' unwillingly, as a wild land full of blood and terror.

The interior is divided again longitudinally. The peasants in the valleys of the Jordan, Litani and Orontes are the most stable, most prosperous yeomen of the country; and beyond them is the strange shifting population of the border lands, wavering eastward or westward with the season, living by their wits only, wasted by droughts and locusts, by Bedouin raids, and if these fail them, by their own incurable blood-feuds.

Each of these main north and south strip-divisions is crossed and walled off into compartments mutually at odds: and it is necessary, if political composition of Syria is to be gauged, to enumerate some of the heads of these.

The boundary between Arab and Turkish speech follows, not inaptly, the coach-road from Alexandretta to Ezaz, and thence the Baghdad railway to Jerablus. On the west it begins among Ansariya, disciples of a strange cult of a principle of fertility, sheer pagan, anti-foreign, distrustful of Mohammedanism, but drawn for the moment to Christianity by the attraction of common persecution; the sect is very vital in itself, and as clannish in feeling and politics as a sect can be. One Nosairi will not betray another, and they will hardly not betray Mohammedan and Christian. Their villages are sown in patches down the main hills from Missis to Tartus and the Tripoli gap, and their sheikhs are Aissa and old Maaruf. They speak Arabic only, and they have lived there



since, at least, the beginning of Greek history. They stand aside from politics, and leave the Turkish Government alone in hope of reciprocity.

Mixed among the Ansariya are colonies of Syrian Christians, and south of the Orontes are (or were) solid blocks of Armenians, who spoke Turkish, but would not consort with Turks. Inland, south of Harim, are settlements of Druses (who are Arabs) and Circassians. These have their hand against every man. North-east of them are Kurds, speaking Kurdish and Arabic, settlers of some generations back, who are marrying Arabs and adopting their politics. They hate native Christians most, and next to them Turks and Europeans. Just beyond the Kurds are some Yezidis, Arabic-speaking, but always trying in their worship to placate a spirit of evil, and with a warped admiration for crude bronze birds. Christians, Mohammedans and Jews unite to spit upon the Yezid. After the Yezidis lies Aleppo, a town of a quarter of a million of people, and an epitome of all races and religions. Eastward of Aleppo for sixty miles you pass through settled Arabs, whose colour and manner becomes more and more tribal as you approach the fringe of cultivation, where the semi-nomad ends and the Bedawi begins.

If you take another section across Syria, a degree more to the south, you begin with some colonies of Mohammedan Circassians near the sea. They speak Arabic now and are an ingenious but quarrelsome race, much opposed by their Arab neighbours. Inland of them are districts reserved for Ismailiya. These speak Arabic, and worship among themselves a king Mohammed, who, in the flesh, is the Agha Khan. They believe him to be a great and wonderful sovereign, honouring the English with his protection. They hate Arabs and orthodox Muslimin, and look for the crumbling of the Turk. Meanwhile, they are loathed and trampled on by their neighbours, and are driven to conceal their beastly opinions under a veneer of orthodoxy. Everyone knows how thin that is, and they maintain among themselves signs and pass-words by which they know one another. Miserably poor in appearance, they pay the Agha a princely tribute every year. Beyond the Ismailiya is a strange sight, villages of Christian tribal Arabs, some of semi-nomad habits,

under their own sheikhs. Very sturdy Christians they are, most unlike their snivelling brethren in the hills. They live as do the Sunnis round them, dress like them, speak like them, and are on the best of terms with them. East of these Christians are semi-nomad Muslim peasants, and east of them again some villages of Ismailiya outcasts, on the extreme edge of cultivation, whither they have retired in search of comparative peace. Beyond them only Bedouins.

Take another section through Syria, a degree lower down, between Tripoli and Beyrout. To begin with, near the coast, are Lebanon Christians, Maronites and Greeks for the most part. It is hard to disentangle the politics of the two churches. Superficially, one should be French and the other Russian, but a part of the Maronites now have been in the United States, and have developed there an Anglo-Saxon vein which is not the less vigorous for being spurious. The Greek church prides itself on being old Syrian, autochthonous, of an intense local patriotism that (with part) would rather fling it into the arms of the Turk than endure irretrievable annexation by a Roman power. The adherents of the two churches are at one in unmeasured slander of Mohammedans and their religion. They salve a consciousness of inbred inferiority by this verbal scorn. Behind and among the Christians live families of Mohammedan Sunnis, Arabic-speaking, identical in race and habit with the Christian, marked off from them by a less mincing dialect, and a distaste for emigration and its results. On the higher slopes of the hills are serried settlements of Metawala, Shia Mohammedans who came from Persia centuries ago. They are dirty, ignorant, surly, and fanatical. They will not eat or drink with an infidel (the Sunni as bad as the Christian), follow their own priests and notables, speak Arabic but disown in every way the people, not their co-sectarians, who live about them. Across the hills are villages of Christians, yeomen, living at peace with their Sunni neighbours, as though they had never heard the grumbles of their fellows in the Lebanon. East of them are semi-nomad Arab peasantry.

Take a section a degree lower down, near Acre. There are first, Sunni Arabs, then Druses, then Metawala to the Jordan valley, near which are

many bitterly-suspicious Algerian colonies, mixed in with villages of aboriginal Palestinian Jews. The latter are an interesting race. They speak Arabic and good Hebrew; have developed a standard and style of living suitable to the country, and yet much better than the manner of the Arabs. They cultivate the land, and hide their lights rather under bushels, since their example would be a great one for the foreign (German inspired) colonies of agricultural Jews, who introduce strange manners of cultivation and crops, and European houses (erected out of pious subscriptions), to a country like Palestine, at once too small and too poor to repay efforts on such a scale. The Jewish colonies of North Palestine pay their way perhaps, but give no proportionate return on their capital expenditure. They are, however, honest in their attempts at colonization, and deserve honour, in comparison with the larger settlements of sentimental remittance-men in South Palestine. Locally, they are more than tolerated; one does not find round Galilee the deep-seated antipathy to Jewish colonists and aims that is such an unlovely feature of the Jerusalem area. Across the Eastern plain (Arabs), you come to the Leja, a labyrinth of crackled lava, where all the loose and broken men of Syria have foregathered for unnumbered generations. Their descendants live there in rich lawless villages, secure from the Government and Bedouins, and working out their own internecine feuds at leisure. South of them is the Hauran, peopled by Arabs and Druses. The latter are Arabic-speaking, a heterodox Mohammedan sect, who revere a mad and dead Sultan of Egypt, and hate Maronites with a hatred which, when encouraged by the Ottoman Government and the Sunni fanatics of Damascus, finds expression in great periodic killings. None the less, the Druses are despised by the Mohammedan Arabs, and dislike them in return. They hate the Bedouins, obey their own chiefs, and preserve in their Hauran fastnesses a parade of the chivalrous semi-feudalism in which they lived in the Lebanon, in the days of the great Emirs.

A section a degree lower would begin with German Zionist Jews, speaking a bastard Hebrew and German Yiddish, more intractable than the Jews of the Roman era, unable to endure near them anyone not of

their race, some of them agriculturists, most of them shop-keepers, the most foreign, most uncharitable part of its whole population. Behind these Jews is their enemy, the Palestine peasant, more stupid than the peasant of North Syria, materialist and bankrupt. East of him lies the Jordan valley, inhabited by a charred race of serfs, and beyond it, group upon group of self-respecting tribal or village Christians, who are, after their co-religionists of the Orontes valley, the least timid examples of their faith in the country. Among them, and east of them, are seminomad and nomad Arabs of the religion of the desert, living on the fear and bounty of their Christian neighbours. Down this debatable land the Ottoman Government has planted a long line of Circassian immigrants. They hold their ground only by the sword and the favour of the Turks, to whom they are consequently devoted.

These odd races and religions do not complete the tale of the races of Syria. There are still the six great towns, Jerusalem, Beyrout, Damascus, Hama, Homs, and Aleppo to be reckoned apart from the country folk in any accounting of Syria.

Jerusalem is a dirty town which all Semitic religions have made holy. Christians and Mohammedans come there on pilgrimage; Jews look to it for the political future of their race. In it the united forces of the past are so strong that the city fails to have a present: its people, with the rarest exceptions, are characterless as hotel servants, living on the crowd of visitors passing through. Questions of Arabs and their nationality are as far from them as bimetallism from the life of Texas, though familiarity with the differences among Christians in their moment of most fervent expression has led the Mohammedans of Jerusalem to despise (and dislike) foreigners generally.

Beyrout is altogether new. It would be all bastard French in feeling, as in language, but for its Greek harbour and its American college. Public opinion in it is that of the Christian merchants, all fat men, who live by exchange, for Beyrout itself produces nothing. After the merchants its strongest component is the class of returned emigrants, living on their invested savings, in the town of Syria which, to them, most resembles the Washington Avenue where they 'made good'. Beyrout is the door of

Syria, with a Levantine screen through which shop-soiled foreign influences flow into Syria. It is as representative of Syria as Soho of the Home Counties, and yet in Beyrout, from its geographical position, from its schools, from the freedom engendered by intercourse with many foreigners, there was a nucleus of people, Mohammedans, talking and writing and thinking like the doctrinaire cyclopædists who paved the way for revolution in France, and whose words permeated to parts of the interior where action is in favour. For their sake (many of them are martyrs now, in Arab eyes) and, for the power of its wealth, and for its exceeding loud and ready voice, Beyrout is to be reckoned with.

Damascus, Homs, Hamah, and Aleppo are the four ancient cities in which Syria takes pride. They are stretched like a chain along the fertile valleys of the interior, between the desert and the hills; because of their setting they turn their backs upon the sea and look eastward. They are Arab and know themselves such.

Damascus is the old inevitable head of Syria. It is the seat of lay government and the religious centre, three days only from the Holy City by its railway. Its sheikhs are leaders of opinion, and more 'Meccan' than others elsewhere. Its people are fresh and turbulent, always willing to strike, as extreme in their words and acts as in their pleasures. Damascus will move before any part of Syria. The Turks made it their military centre, just as naturally as the Arab Opposition, or Oppenheim and Sheikh Shawish established themselves there. Damascus is a lodestar to which Arabs are naturally drawn, and a city which will not easily be convinced that it is subject to any alien race.

Hamah and Homs are towns which dislike one another. Everyone in them manufactures things—in Homs, generally cotton and wool, in Hamah, silk and brocade. Their industries were prosperous and increasing; their merchants were quick to take advantage of new outlets, or to meet new tastes. North Africa, the Balkans, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia used their stuffs. They demonstrated the productive ability of Syria, unguided by foreigners, as Beyrout demonstrated its understanding of commerce. Yet, while the prosperity of Beyrout has made it

Levantine, the prosperity of Homs and Hamah has reinforced their localism, made them more entirely native, and more jealously native than any other Syrian towns. It almost seems as though familiarity with plant and power had shown the people there that the manners of their fathers were the best.

Aleppo is the largest city in Syria, but not of it, nor of Turkey, nor of Mesopotamia. Rather it is a point where all the races, creeds and tongues of the Ottoman Empire meet and know one another in a spirit of compromise. The clash of varied characteristics, which makes its streets a kaleidoscope, has imbued in the Aleppine a kind of thoughtfulness, which corrects in him what is wanton in the Damascene. Aleppo has shared in each of the civilizations which turn about it, and the result seems to be a lack of zest in all that its people do. Even so, they surpass the rest of Syria in most things. They fight and trade more, are more fanatical and vicious, and make most beautiful things, but all with a dearth of conviction that renders their great strength barren. It is typical of Aleppo that here, where yet Mohammedan feeling runs high, there is more fellowship between Christian and Mohammedan, Armenian, Arab, Kurd, Turk and Jew, than in, perhaps, any other great city of the Ottoman Empire, and more friendliness, though less licence, is accorded to Europeans on the part of the average Mohammedan. Aleppo would stand aside from political action altogether but for the influence of the great unmixed Arab quarters which lie on its outskirts like overgrown, half-nomad villages. These are, after the Maidan of Damascus, the most national of any parts of towns, and the intensity of their Arab feeling tinges the rest of the citizens with a colour of nationalism, which is by so much less vivid than the unanimous opinion of Damascus.

In the creeds and races above described, and in others not enumerated, lie the raw materials of Syria for a statesman. It will be noted that the distinctions are political or religious; morally the peoples somewhat resemble one another, with a steady gradation from neurotic sensibility, on the coast, to reserve, inland. They are quick-minded, admirers (but not seekers) of truth, self-satisfied, not incapable (as are



the Egyptians) of abstract ideas, but unpractical, and so lazy mentally as to be superficial. Their wish is to be left alone to busy themselves with others' affairs. From childhood they are lawless, obeying their fathers only as long as they fear to be beaten, and their government later for the same reason: yet there are few races with a greater respect than the upland Syrian for customary law. All of them want something new, for with their superficiality and their lawlessness is combined a passion for politics, the science of which it is fatally easy for the Syrian to gain a smattering, and too difficult to gain a mastery. They are all discontented with the government they have, but few of them honestly combine their ideas of what they want. Some (mostly Mohammedans) cry for an Arab kingdom, some (mostly Christians) for a foreign protection of an altruistic thelemic order, conferring privileges without obligation. Others cry for autonomy for Syria.

Autonomy is a comprehensible word, Syria is not, for the words Syria and Syrian are foreign terms. Unless he has learnt English or French, the inhabitant of these parts has no word to describe all his country. *Syria* in Turkish (the word exists not in Arabic) is the province of Damascus. *Sham* in Arabic is the town of Damascus. An Aleppine always calls himself an Aleppine, a Beyrouti a Beyrouti, and so down to the smallest villages.

This verbal poverty indicates a political condition. There is no national feeling. Between town and town, village and village, family and family, creed and creed, exist intimate jealousies, sedulously fostered by the Turks to render a spontaneous union impossible. The largest indigenous political entity in settled Syria is only the village under its sheikh, and in patriarchal Syria the tribe under its chief. These leaders are chosen, not formally, but by opinion from the entitled families, and they rule by custom and consent. All the constitution above them is the artificial bureaucracy of the Turk, maintained by force, impossible if it were to be carried out according to its paper scheme, but in practice either fairly good or very bad, according to the less or greater frailty of the human instruments through which it works.

Time seems to have proclaimed that autonomous union is beyond the



powers of such a people. In history, Syria is always the corridor between sea and desert, joining Africa to Asia, and Arabia to Europe. It has been a prize-ring for the great peoples lying about it, alternately the vassal of Asia Minor, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Arabia or Mesopotamia, and when given a momentary independence by the weakness of its neighbours, it has at once resolved itself fiercely into Northern and Southern, Eastern and Western discordant 'kingdoms', with the areas and populations at best of Yorkshire, at worst of Rutland; for if Syria is by nature a vassal country, it is also by habit a country of agitations and rebellions.

The proposals to make Syria an Arab or foreign-protected country are, of course, far from the hearts of the 'autonomy' party, but the conviction of their internal divisions, and the evident signs that Syria's neighbours are not going to be of the weak sort that enable it to snatch a momentary independence, have reconciled these parts to having such proposals constantly on their lips.

By accident and time the Arabic language has gradually permeated the country, until it is now almost the only one in use; but this does not mean that Syria—any more than Egypt—is an Arabian country. On the sea coast there is little, if any, Arabic feeling or tradition: on the desert edge there is much. Indeed, racially, there is perhaps something to be said for the suggestion—thrown in the teeth of geography and economics—of putting the littoral under one government, and the interior under another.

Whatever the limits of future politics, it can hardly be contested that, like a European Government, an Arab Government in Syria, to-day or to-morrow, would be an imposed one, as the former Arab Governments were. The significant thing is to know what local basis, if any, such a Government would have; and one finds that it would be buttressed on two fronts, both contained in the word 'Arab', which seems to strike a chord in some of the most unlikely minds. The Moham-medans, whose mother tongue is Arabic, look upon themselves, for

that reason, as a chosen people. The patriotism which should have attached itself to soil or race has been warped to fit a language. The heritage of the Koran and the classical poets holds the Arabic-speaking peoples together. The second buttress of an Arab polity is the dim distortion of the old glories and conquests of the Arabian Khalifate, which has persisted in the popular memory through centuries of Turkish misgovernment. The accident that these ideas savour rather of Arabian Nights than of sober history retains the Arabs in the conviction that their past was greater than the present of the Ottoman Turks.

To sum up—a review of the present components of Syria proves it as vividly coloured a racial and religious mosaic to-day as it has notoriously been in the past. Any wide attempt at autonomy would end in a patched and parcelled thing, an imposition on a people whose instincts for ever and ever have been for parochial home-rule. It is equally clear that the seething discontent which Syrians cherish with the present Turkish administration is common enough to render possible a fleeting general movement towards a new factor, if it appeared to offer a chance realization of the ideals of centripetal nationalism preached by the Beyrout and Damascus cyclopædists of the last two generations. Also, that only by the intrusion of a new factor, founded on some outward power or non-Syrian basis, can the dissident tendencies of the sects and peoples of Syria be reined in sufficiently to prevent destructive anarchy. The more loose, informal, inchoate this new government, the less will be the inevitable disillusionment following on its institution; for the true ideal of Syria, apart from the minute but vociferous Christian element, is not an efficient administration, but the minimum of central power to ensure peace, and permit the unchecked development of customary law. Also, that the only imposed government that will find, in Moslem Syria, any really prepared groundwork or large body of adherents is a Sunni one, speaking Arabic, and pretending to revive the Abbassides or Ayubides.

T.E.L.

## XVIII. GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND THE CAPTURE OF ESHREF

[Arab Bulletin, 12 March 1917]

### *Wadi Hamdh.*

THE LOWER VALLEY OF WADI HAMDH IS A TEN-MILE wide depression. 'At 3 p.m.', writes Captain Lawrence, 'we entered the wadi itself. It proved to be an immense bed of sandy hillocks a few feet high, cut up with shallow channels, which bore no signs of any general *seil*, though evidently local showers fill one or other of them frequently. Channels and hillocks are alike overgrown with the thickest growth of *ethil* and *tarfa* imaginable. It was difficult for us to force our camels through in places. The bed was in all about a mile wide, running from 100° E. to 300° W., and we cut across it obliquely till 3.30 p.m., when we passed a water-pool about eighty yards long, fifteen yards wide, and two feet deep in a clay bottom, and 200 yards further reached the bare flint ridge of the Billi bank of the wadi, which extends as an empty plain to the abrupt foot of Jebel Raal, four or five miles away. The pool of water is within a few yards of the well of Abu Zereibat, and one or other of them affords water all the year round.'

### *Wadi el-Ais.*

Feisal said to Captain Lawrence that the road up Wadi Yambo to the railway at Bowat Station was very difficult for loaded camels. There is a road by Bowat village to Wadi Ais, and another from Kheif Hussein in Wadi Yambo to Bir Fueis, by Ras el-Magrah, between Jebel Radhwah and Jebel Tareif, and thence over a *harrah* to el-Ain, near Murabba in Wadi Ais. Murabba lies a long day's journey from the railway, and is said to be the last oasis in Wadi Ais. The water springs and plantations endure for a day's camel journey west of Murabba, and Wadi Ais itself for another day after that, up to a high pass between Jebel Tubi and Jebel Mertaba, a day from Wadi Girs and Um Lej. These passes (with Wadi Hamdh) are the only roads into Wadi Ais, which is bounded on

both sides by difficult hills and *harrahs*. There are many springs and wells of water, but the groves are poorer than those of Wadi Yambo.

#### *Wadi Aqiq.*

Feisal told Captain Lawrence that Wadi Aqiq, which rises between Lith and Taif, and flows through Taif, becomes Wadi Shaiba near the Harrat el-Muteir, and eventually flows between Ohod and Medina, as Wadi Aqiq, into the Wadi Hamdh. As the crowfly distance from beyond Taif to Medina is about 300 miles, this wadi, hitherto unexplored, must be one of the most important channels in Arabia. The Darb esh-Sharqi, from Mecca to Medina, is known to cross it at Birkah, about 80 miles N.N.E. of Mecca: but, though this road may hit its course again more than once, the reports (*e.g.* Burton's) show that it does not follow the valley continuously. A wadi of the same name reappears just south-west of Medina, in accounts of pilgrim marches between Medina and Bir Abbas, and possibly this is the lower end of the original Aqiq immediately before it loses itself in Wadi Hamdh.

#### *The Capture of Eshref Bey.*

Eshref was met quite by accident about 2 p.m. in easy country at a spot called Gambila, about six hours from Kheibar, and was galloped down at once, before he could get off more than sixty or seventy rounds with his machine-gun. The Arabs lost four killed and four wounded, and captured the whole of his party. He had with him letters to Ibn Rashid, Ibn Saud, and the Yemen; £20,000 in gold; presents of carpets and clothes, a machine-gun with five spare barrels and 50,000 rounds, a box of Mauser pistols, etc.

Abdullah subsequently marched across the railway between Jedaha and Stabl Antar, without seeing any enemy patrols, and he left, between the metals, a letter to Fakhri with an account of the capture of Eshref. His force includes Muteir, Ateibah, Buqum, and Anezah, and he has got in a few Huteim mercenaries. The force left at Henakiyah is about 300 strong. The desert seems in a very lively state, and nothing gets through

unplundered. Nejd caravans are making for Mecca rather than Medina, to avoid the danger zone.

Abdullah sent to Feisal Eshref's gaudy Medina-made dagger as a trophy (given subsequently by Feisal to Colonel Wilson), and there was great rejoicing in Feisal's army all night. The H.Q. poet (also chaplain, and as Muedhdhin, waker-up-in-general to the force) produced a creditable ode in sixteen minutes. The ode summed up the situation in favour of Abdullah, but said that Feisal's opportunities were coming.

## XIX. RAIDS ON THE RAILWAY

[Arab Bulletin, 13 May 1917]

### I.—*Abu Markha to Abu el-Naam*

FROM MARCH 15 TO MARCH 26 I STAYED IN SIDI ABDULLAH's camp. On Monday, March 26, we started off at 7.50 a.m. for the railway at Abu el-Naam. With me were Sherif Fauzan (Hurith, Emir of el-Modhiq), Sherif Suleima (Abdilla), Sidi Raho (Algerian officer in French service), and Mohammed el-Gadhi (Juheinah). We were joined shortly by Mufaddhil, a Selqa Anazeh Sheikh. Total force, about thirty men. We went away down Wadi Ais till 8.50 a.m., when we turned slightly to the left, after rounding the mouth of Wadi Tleih coming from the north-west. At 9.20 a.m. we crossed to the right bank of the wadi, under a rock wall, and at 9.30 a.m. reached a corner and bore more to the right. This is El-Marraha. At 10 a.m. we turned a little to the left, and came out of the narrows on to a broad plain, formed by the confluence of the wadis from right to left. Just in front of us was Bir el-Amri, about twenty feet deep; water slightly brackish, but abundant. The hills on the right, beyond the bend of the wadi, are high. At 10.40 a.m. we halted under a great *sidr* tree, and spent the mid-day there. Wadi Ais proved almost luxuriant with its thorn trees and grass. There was a cool east wind, and the valley was full of white butterflies and the scents of flowers.

We mounted again at 3.40 p.m., and at 3.50 p.m. reached an old

wall, which deflects the stream of the wadi to its left bank, and guards an earth terrace, about five feet high, on its south side, against floods. The wall is constructed of chosen unhewn blocks, about a foot square each, and tolerably coursed. It is about a mile and a half long, and fairly solid. Its present greatest height is about four feet, but it must go down some considerable depth below the wadi bed, to withstand the floods. In the terrace, about 400 yards wide, partitioned off by the wall, are remains of fields, house-foundations, and a large sunk water-basin, of correct masonry. At 4.10 p.m. we left Wadi Ais, which turned off northwards on our left towards Murabba. We went up a narrow valley into Jebel Serd. At 4.45 p.m. a valley came in on the right; at 5.5 p.m. we reached an easy watershed and crossed the heads of a valley flowing north to Wadi Ais. At 5.15 p.m. we crossed a second watershed, also easy, and went down a small valley into W. Serum at 5.25 p.m. We camped here for the night, watering from Ghadir Seriam (Moeit Hefna), ten minutes away in the foothills east of us.

*Tuesday, March 27*

Started at 5.35 a.m. and crossed El-Mauggad to the north end of J. Serd, and went up and down its first spur by a very steep, sharp path (there is a much better road for guns, ten minutes south of our road, over J. Serd). This took us down into a deep wadi, which we crossed, and thence over a second wadi (Seil el-Howeiti) and a low divide, giving on a side valley, up which we wound to another steep saddle at 7.3 a.m., and a nasty descent into a long rough narrow valley leading down into Wadi Turaa, which enters Hamdh opposite the mouth of W. Tubja. We reached this W. Turaa at 7.45 a.m., and camped at 8.25 a.m. near Bir Fueir. W. Turaa is a plain, bearing north-west, full of trees, and grass, with a sandy surface, much cut up with *seils*. One of these had filled in the well this year, but waterpools exist in plenty in the hills, so that the many tents in the valley have no lack of water. Wadi Turaa is the best way down to Wadi Yambo, and Ras el-Fura (Kheif Husein) is about two days camel from here. The flat-topped straight-sided hills on the north bank of the valley are J. Um Rutba. The valley is Urwa dira.

We started again at 4.20 p.m. and at 5.5 p.m. turned 60° up a valley. At 5.20 p.m. about 120° and at 5.30 p.m. 60° again, up the upper course of W. Turaa, a broad smooth road, for half an hour till we lost the way, and wandered about the foothills, like Virgil's crippled snake, till 6.40 p.m., just across the watershed of W. Turaa and W. Meseiz. Our guides were at fault in bringing us (to be near some tents) too far north from our first entry into the Turaa plain. The quickest and best road is straight across to Ain Turaa, and up the east branch of the wadi direct to the watershed.

*Wednesday, March 28*

Rode at 5.5 a.m. past north end of J. Tareif and down W. Meseiz, which is a steep, loose ramp of shingle and stones, scored deeply by water, unfit for wheeled traffic, into the great plain of el-Jurf, across which W. Meseiz cuts its way east to join W. Gussed, flowing north from J. Agrad. At 6.15 a.m. we were well into el-Jurf, and going due east, with J. Antar, a castellated rock with a split head perched on a cone, most conspicuous about ten miles off to the south. J. Jeddah, a group of needles, lay about six miles off down W. Gussed beyond Abu el-Hellu. We rode 90° till 7 a.m. and then 140° till 7.40 a.m., and camped under a tree in Wadi Gussed. It is very fertile in a wild way—indeed all the Jurf is. We were camped nearly at the south end of a tongue of hills, which walls off el-Jurf from the Hamdh valley. To the south el-Jurf opens into el-Magrah, up which the railway climbs to a watershed near J. Bueir, and one comes down to join the Hamdh at Abu el-Naam; and our own Wadi Guad, rising a little further west, in the foothills of Azrad (where is water in *themail*), runs down north to join the Hamdh near Jedahah, after giving the waterhole of Abu el-Hella on its passage through the hills. J. Tareif, prolonged by Azrad, forms a blank wall of hill to Bowat. There is no way up it for camels into the valleys beyond, except a difficult pass just south of our camp.

In the afternoon we went up the Dhula of Abu el-Naam, just behind the camp, and examined the railway and the station at 6,000 yards. It has two large basalt and cement two-storeyed buildings, a circular



water-tower, and a small house to the west; and about the houses were many bell tents and shelter tents. The perimeter was heavily entrenched, but there were no guns visible, and we only saw about 300 men. A trolley went off north with only one man on it, to the bridge over W. Hamdh, which Dakhilallah had attacked. It was a large bridge, of about twenty arches of white stone, and next to it were some shelters, and on the top of a coal-black mound just north of the bridge, some dozen white tents, with Turkish officers lounging in chairs beside them. At 2 p.m. a train (locomotive reversed), came in from the south. It had four water cisterns (improvised iron tanks on trucks), and four box-wagons, and after watering, went off north. The station of Istabl Antar was clearly visible on the Ras el-Magrah, but Jedhah was behind hills. Returned to camp at sunset, after sending snipers to Istabl and Jedhah to stop night patrolling. The Turks had been very active lately by night, but we succeeded in confining them to stations by the simple means of firing shots in the air near the stations at night. They expected an attack, and therefore concentrated the men in the G.H.Q. and stood to arms in the trenches all night.

*Thursday, March 29*

Up at 5.20 a.m. Very cold, with a restless dawn wind blowing down el-Jurf, singing in the great trees round our camp. We spent most of the day admiring Abu el-Naam from the hill-top. The garrison paraded, and we counted them as 390 infantry, and twenty-five goats. No camels or horses, except the two or three near the well, which we captured subsequently. A train came in from the north, and one from the south. That from the south went on and contained baggage and women. The northern train stayed all day and the night in the station. At midday we heard from Sherif Shakir, who was coming up with the main body (we were only the reconnaissance), that he would arrive at sunset, and we wandered out across el-Jurf to the last foothills of Dhula Abu el-Naam, till we found what seemed to be a good gun-position, about 2,000 yards west of the station. There were no Turkish outposts to be found, except that on the bridge. Behind the station is a steep hill, J. Unseih,

about 400 yards distant, and we decided to put 400 men into it, to take the Turks in the rear.

The hills about us were typical of the Eastern Hejaz hills. They were of glistening, sunburnt stone, very metallic in ring when struck, and splitting red or green or brown as the case may be. The upper part of the hill is a cap, of an outcrop of base rock, and the lower scree is hard at the foot, where they are packed with a thin soil, but loose and sliding on the slopes. From them sprout occasional thorn bushes, and frequent grasses. The commonest grass sends up a dozen blades from one root, and grows hand- to knee-high, of yellow-green colours. At the head are empty ears, between many feathered arrows of silvery down. With these and a shorter grass, ankle deep, bearing a bottle-brush head of pearl-grey, the hillsides are furred white, and dance gaily in the wind. One cannot call it verdure, but it is excellent pasture, and in the valleys are great tufts of coarse grass, waist high, bright green in colour till it fades to a burnt yellow, and growing thickly in all water-lined sand or shingle. Between these tufts are thorn trees from eight to forty-feet in height, and less frequently *sidr* trees, giving thick shade, and dry sugary fruit. Add some brown tamarisk, broom, a great variety of coarse grass and flowers, and everything that has thorns, and you exhaust the usual vegetation of the Hejaz. Only on steep hillsides is there a little plant, *hemeid*, with fleshy green heart-shaped leaves and a spike of white or red blossom. Its leaves are pleasantly acid, and allay thirst.

Shakir arrived at 5 p.m., but brought only 300 men, two machine guns, one mountain gun, and one mountain howitzer. The lack of infantry made the scheme of taking the station in rear impossible, since it would have left the guns without support; so we changed ideas, and decided on an artillery action only. We sent a dynamite party to the north of the station, to cut rails and telegraph at dawn. I started at 8 p.m. with a company of Ateibah and a machine-gun, to lay a mine and cut the wire between Abu el-Naam and Istabl Antar. Mohammed el-Gadhi guided us very well, and we reached the line at 11.15 p.m., in a place where there was cover for the machine-gun in a group of bushes and a sandy valley bed about four feet deep, 500 yards west of the rails. I laid

a mine, and cut the wire, and at 1 a.m. started back for the main body with a few Ageyl, but did not get in till 5 a.m., through various accidents, and was not able to go forward to the artillery position till 6.30 a.m. I found the guns just ready, and we shelled the station till 10 a.m., when Shakir found that the Ateibah infantry had no water, and we retired to W. Gussed without molestation. *Girbis* are mostly unobtainable in the eastern Hejaz, which makes it difficult for an Arab force of more than a dozen men to remain in action for half a day.

The results of the bombardment were to throw the upper storeys of the large stone buildings into the ground-floors, which were reported to contain stores and water-cisterns. We could not demolish the ground-floors. The water-tank (metal) was pierced and knocked out of shape, and three shells exploded in the pumping room and brought down much of the wall. We demolished the well-house, over the well, burned the tents and the wood-pile and obtained a hit on the first waggon of the train in the station. This set it on fire, and the flames spread to the remaining six waggons, which must have contained inflammable stores, since they burned furiously. The locomotive was behind the northern building, and got steam up, and went off (reversed) towards Medina. When it passed over the mine it exploded it, under the front bogies (*i.e.* too late). It was, however, derailed, and I hoped to see the machine-gun come into action against it, but it turned out that the gunners had left their position to join us in our attack on the station, and so the seven men on the engine were able to 'jack' it on the line again in about half an hour (only the front wheels were derailed) and it went off towards Istabl Antar, at foot-pace, clanking horribly.

The north end of the station now surrendered, and about 200 of the garrison of the north end rushed in driblets for the hills (J. Unseila) and took cover there. I examined the prisoners (twenty-four in number, Syrians, of 130th Regt.), and also the brake-van of the train. The box-body had been lined with matchboard, at an interval of about four inches, and packed near the floor with cement (loopholed) and above with shingle, but it was burning hotly, and the Turks were too close for me to obtain accurate details.

We fired altogether fifty rounds (shrapnel) from 2,200 and 900 yards and about ten belts of machine-gun ammunition. Deserters reported about thirty dead (I saw nine only) and forty-two wounded. We captured the pedigree mare of Ali Nasir (the Egyptian 'Bab-Arab' in Medina) and a couple of camels from the well-house, and destroyed many rails. Our casualties were one man wounded. Had there been enough Arab infantry to occupy J. Unseila, which commanded the trenches at 400 yards (plunging fire), I think we could have taken the entire garrison. The Ateibah were not asked to do very much, and I do not think would have done it if asked. The Juheinah and the gunners behaved very well, and I think that the attack—as an experiment—justified itself. It had the effect, in the next three days, of persuading the Turks to evacuate every outpost and blockhouse on the line, and concentrate the garrison in the various railway stations. This action facilitated the work of the dynamite parties.

*Friday, March 30*

We marched back to el-Jurf, and camped in the middle of it from 12.30 p.m. till 3 p.m. We then rode up the Wadi Meseiz (gradually turning west and south) till the watershed at 5.15 p.m., and at 5.30 p.m. had crossed the divide into W. Turaa, and rode down it till 6.30 p.m., when we camped at Ain Turaa, just where the eastern Wadi Turaa enters the great plain of Bir Fueis. The march (like all Shakir's marches) was very fast. The water of the W. Ain is very good, and fairly plentiful.

*Saturday, March 31*

Left el-Ain at 5.45 a.m.; rode across the plain, up the side of the wadi and over an easy pass (to the right) into Seil el-Howeita. From this we took the easy southern road into el-Muaggad, and stopped from 8.30 a.m. till 3.45 p.m. in Wadi Serum. We then marched to Bir el-Amri at 5.45 p.m. and camped there.

*Sunday, April 1*

Rode from Bir el-Amri to camp at Abu Markha from 6 a.m. till 8.30 a.m.

Abu Markha to Abu el-Naam: 14 hours, 20 minutes.

Abu el-Naam to Abu Markha: 13 hours, 15 minutes.

## II.—*Abu Markha to Madahrij*

After returning from Abu el-Naam with Sherif Shakir, I stopped a short while with Sidi Abdullah, and on Monday, April 2, marched at 2.20 a.m. for the railway to the north of Hadiyah. I took with me Dakhilallah el-Gadhi with 40 Juheinah, and had as well Sultan el-Abbud (Ateibah), Sherif Abdullah, and Sherif Agab (two sons of Hamza el-Feir), and Mohammed el-Gadhi. A machine-gun with six men and seven infantrymen (Syrians) came along also, as my hope was to derail a train with a Garland mine, and then attack it from a previously prepared machine-gun position. Sherif Shakir rode the first half-hour with us.

We marched down Wadi Ais by the same road as that to Abu el-Naam to the village site at 6.20 p.m. Instead of leaving Wadi Ais at this point, we turned north with the valley, and camped at 7 p.m. opposite Magreh el-Semn, under hills on the left bank of the Wadi.

## *Tuesday, April 3*

Marched at 5.20 a.m. up the wadi at 50° till 5.35 a.m., and then swung round towards 20° in a curve till 6 a.m., aiming direct at J. Shemail, a great mass, which deflects the valley westward. At 5.40 a.m. we were opposite the mouth of W. Serum, and at 5.55 a.m. passed Bir Bedair on our left. At 6 a.m. we were opposite the point of J. Shemail, and the wadi, which had been clear and broad and shingly, narrowed down. At 6.30 a.m. Wadi Gharid came in on the left (it is the quickest way to Abu Markha, but steep), and at 6.40 a.m. we were opposite Bir Bedia, in the mouth of Seil Bedia on the left of our road. Seil Bedia rises near Seil Osman. The wadi now widened out and became full of large trees, and more green than any wadi I had seen in the Hejaz. It has come down in flood twice this year, and affords splendid pasturage. We were now going about 40° and at 7.15 a.m. reached Bir el-Murabba, in a broad part of Wadi Ais, where it became a small and very

beautiful plain. We then turned 60° and marched down the wadi till 7.45 a.m., when we halted opposite the mouth of Seil el-Howeiti (from J. Serd). At 1.15 p.m. we marched again, and at 1.45 p.m. reached Ribiaan, the last well in Wadi Ais. The well is lined with a rough stone steining, and is about ten feet in diameter and fifteen feet deep; water very slightly brackish. Wadi Ais at this point leaves the hills, and enters a great open plain, studded with low mounds. This plain is the common bed (or united beds) of, amongst others, Wadi Ais, Wadi Hamdh, W. Tubja, W. Turar, and W. Jizal (Gizal or Qizal, since the ق is pronounced ٢ by the Juheinah and eastern Billi). In the north the plain is bounded by J. Gussa, on the Billi bank of the Hamdh. On the west, to Wadi Ais, by J. Jasim (Kasim, Qasim or Gasim to taste; it is a ق), and south of Wadi Ais by J. Um Reitba, continued in J. Tareif and J. Ajrad. On the east it is bounded by J. Nahar, the east bank of W. Jizal, and then by el-Mreikat, J. Jindal, and J. Unseih. On the south it runs down into el-Jurf and el-Magrah, and J. Antar is clearly visible from the mouth of Wadi Ais, forming the southern boundary of the plain, miles away towards Medina.

We left the direct road a little, when we mounted at 2.10 p.m. and marched a little way north-east. At 2.40 p.m. we left Wadi Ais and crossed a low bank into el-Fershah, a parallel wadi, in which were many tents of Harb and Anazeh, come by permission into the Juheinah *dira* for pasture. We camped near them (they refused us hospitality) at 3.20 p.m.

*Wednesday, April 4*

Rode at 5.30 a.m. and at 6.15 a.m. crossed the level bed of Wadi Tura, and Wadi Hamdh at 6.45 a.m. The Hamdh was as full of *aslam* wood as at Abu Zereibat and had the same hummocky bed, with sandy blisters over it—but it was only about 200 yards wide, and shallow. We halted at 8 a.m. in W. Tubja, which was a sort of wilderness garden, with a profusion of grass and shrubs in which the camels rejoiced. The weather was very hot, with a burning sun that made the sandy ground impossible for me to walk on barefoot. The Arabs have soles like asbestos, and

made little complaint, except of the warmth of the air. There had been thunder all yesterday, and half a dozen showers of rain last night and to-day. J. Serd and J. Kasim were wrapped in shafts and sheets of a dark blue and yellow vapour that seemed motionless and solid. We marched across W. Tubja again at 1.20 p.m. About 1.40 p.m. we noticed that part of the yellow cloud from J. Serd was approaching us, against the wind, raising scores of dust-devils before its feet. It also produced two dust-spouts, tight and symmetrical—stationary columns, like chimneys—one to the right and one to the left of its advance.

When it got nearer, the wind, which had been scorching us from the north-east, changed suddenly, and became bitterly cold and damp, from the south-west. It increased greatly in violence, and at the same time the sunlight disappeared and the air became thick and ochre-yellow. About three minutes later the advancing brown wall (I think it was about 1,500 feet high) struck us, and proved to be a blanket of dust, and large grains of sand, twisting and turning most violently with itself, and at the same time advancing east at about forty miles an hour. The internal whirling winds had the most bizarre effect. They tore our cloaks from us, turned our camels sometimes right round, and sometimes drew them together in a vortex, and large bushes, tufts of grass, and small trees were torn up clean by the roots, in a dense cloud of the soil about them, and were driven against us, or dashed over our heads, with sometimes dangerous force. We were never blinded—it was always possible to see seven or eight feet each side—but it was risky to look out, since one never knew if one would meet a flying tree, or a rush of pebbles, or a column of dust.

This *habub* lasted for eighteen minutes, and then ceased nearly as suddenly as it had come, and while we and our clothes and camels were all smothered in dust and yellow from head to foot, down burst torrents of rain, and muddied us to the skin. The wind swung round to the north, and the rain drove before it through our cloaks, and chilled us through and through. At 3 p.m. we had crossed the plain and entered the bare valley of W. Dhajji, which cuts through J. Jindal at its southern end, from the railway to the Hamdh. It is fairly broad at first, sandy, with



precipitous rock walls. We rode up it till 4 p.m. and left our camels in a side valley, and climbed a hill to see the line. The hill was of naked rock, and with the wet and the numbing cold the Ateibah servant of Sultan el-Abbud lost his nerve, pitched over a cliff, and smashed his skull to pieces. It was our only casualty on the trip.

When we got to the hill-top it was too thick weather to see the railway, so I returned to the camels, and shivered by them for an hour or two. We were stumbled upon by a mounted man, with whom we exchanged ineffectual shots, and were annoyed by this, as surprise was essential, and we could hear the bugles of Madahrij sounding recall and supper in the station, which was also an irritation. However, at 9 p.m. the explosives came up, with the rest of the party, and I started out with Sultan, Dakhilallah and Mohammed el-Gadhi for the line.

We had some delay in finding a machine-gun position, for the railway runs everywhere near the eastern hills of the valley, and the valley is about 3,000 yards broad. However, eventually, we found a place opposite kilometre 1121, and I laid a mine (trigger central, with rail-cutting charges 15 yards north and south of it respectively) with some difficulty owing to the rain, at 12 p.m. It took till 1.45 a.m. to cover up the traces of the digging, and we left the whole bank, and the sandy plain each side, as covered with huge footmarks as though a school of elephants had danced on it, and made tracks that a blind man could have felt. I wiped out most of those on the embankment itself, however, by walking up and down in shoes over it. Such prints are indistinguishable from the daily footmarks of the patrol inspecting the line.

We got back to the new position at 2.30 a.m. (still raining and blowing and very cold) and sat about on stones till dawn, when the camels and machine-gun came up. Dakhilallah, who had been guide and leader all night, now sent out patrols and sentries and outposts in all directions, and went on a hilltop himself with glasses to watch the line. The sun fortunately came out, so we were able to get dry and warm, and by midday were again gasping in the heat. A cotton shirt is a handy garment, but not adaptable to such sudden changes of temperature.

Thursday, April 5

At 6 a.m. a trolley with four men and a sergeant as a passenger came from Hadiyah (Haraimil) to Madahrij, passing over the mine without stopping. A working party of sixty men came out of Madahrij, and began to replace five telegraph poles blown down near the station the day before by the *habub*. At 7.30 a.m. a patrol of eleven men marched south along the line, two inspecting each rail minutely, one walking along the bank in charge, and then at fifty yards interval right and left of the line, looking for tracks. At kilometre 1121 they found abundance of the latter, and concentrated on the permanent way, and wandered up and down it, and scratched the ballast, and thought for a prolonged period. They then went on to near J. Sueij (Sueij, Sueik, or Sueiq, to taste) and exchanged greetings with the Hadiyah patrol. At 8.30 a.m. a train of nine trucks, packed with women, children and household effects came up from Hadiyah, and ran over the mine without exploding it, rather to our relief, since they were not quite the prize we had been hoping for.

The Juheinah were greatly excited when the train came along, and all rushed up to Dakhilallah's lookout, where we were, to see it. Our stone *zariba* had been made for five only, so that the hilltop became suddenly and visibly populous. This was too much for the nerves of Madahrij, which called in its working party, and opened a brisk rifle fire on us, at about 5,000 yards. Hadiyah (or rather its outpost on a hilltop) was encouraged by this to take a share. As they were about 1,200 yards off, they retained their fire, but played selections on the bugle from 8.30 a.m. till 4 p.m.

This disclosure of ourselves put us in rather an unfortunate position. The Juheinah and myself were on camels, and therefore pretty safe, but the machine-gun was a sledge-maxim (German) and very heavy. It was on a mule, and the mules could only walk. Our position was between Madahrij (200 men) and Hadiyah (1,100 men), with Hadiyah in Wadi Tubja, behind our backs. I was afraid of their trying to cut us off in the rear, and after consulting Dakhilallah we rode past Madahrij to the head of W. Um Reikham, which runs into Tubja just north of J. Jindal, and

sent the mules with an escort of fifteen Juheinah back to Wadi Ais. Had the Turks attacked us, the few Juheinah with me would not have been enough to cover the retreat of the gun: and the gunners were Meccan tailors, inexperienced in handling it.

Dakhilallah, Sultan Mohammed and myself then rode back to the head of Wadi Dhajje, and camped at 9.40 a.m. under some good shady trees, from which we could see the line. This appeared to annoy the Turks, who shot and trumpeted at us incessantly, till about 4.30 p.m. No trains passed during this time—I fancy our presence held up the traffic, for a lone engine came down from the north to Madahrij, and there was also heavy smoke from Hadiyah station.

At 4.30 p.m. the Turkish noise stopped, and we got on our camels at 5 p.m. and rode out slowly across the plain towards the line. Madahrij revived in a paroxysm of rifle fire (4,000 yards, no damage) and all the trumpets of Hadiyah began again. Dakhilallah was most pleased. We went straight to kilometre 1121, and made the camels kneel beside the line, while Dakhilallah (whose strong piety has a vein of humour) called the *idhan*, and led the sunset prayer between the rails. As soon as it got dark the Turks became quiet, and I dug up the mine (a most unpleasant proceeding: laying a Garland mine is shaky work, but scrabbling along a line for 100 yards in the ballast looking for a trigger that is connected with two powerful charges must be a quite uninsurable occupation), and I found it had sunk a sixteenth of an inch, probably owing to the damp ground. We replaced it, and then fired a number of charges along the rails between us and Madahrij with great effect. We also cut up a good deal of telegraph wire and a number of poles, and at 7.30 p.m. rode off down W. Dhajje again. At 9 p.m. we reached the Tubja-Hamdh plain, and galloped across it furiously, passing Wadi Hamdh, W. Turaa, W. Abu Marra, and reaching El-Fershah and the machine-gun camp at 12.15 a.m.

*Friday, April 6*

Started at 6 a.m., reached Rubiaan at 7 a.m., and left it at 7.15 a.m. Wadi Ais had been down in flood since we left, and the surface was all

shining with white slime and pools of soft grey water. The camels slipped over this most amusingly, and most of the party went down. Dakhilallah therefore drew us up a mouth of Seil Howeiti, and across its delta, and over a little pass into the eastern bay of the plain of Murebba in Wadi Ais. We crossed this, passed Seil Badia, and halted at 9.15 a.m. in the mouth of W. Gharid. We mounted again at 2.45 p.m. and rode slowly (everything was stiff and tired) to the bend of Wadi Ais by the ruins at 4.45 p.m., where we camped for the night. Our two messengers who had been left in Dhajje came in late, and reported that the mine (which we had heard explode very vigorously at 7.30 a.m. this morning) had gone off north and south of a locomotive with rails and about 300 soldiers, arriving from Hadiyah to repair our damage. The quantity of Turks frightened our men away, so I cannot say if any inconvenience was caused the train; but the break in the line was not repaired for five days, which looks as though something had delayed the enemy.

*Saturday, April 7*

We started at 1 a.m. and slept the rest of the night in Marraha from 2.30 a.m. till 6 a.m. Then rode and reached Abu Markha at 8 a.m.

The results of this trip were to show me the rare value of Dakhilallah and his son. Their humour makes railway-breaking a pleasure to them; their authority keeps the Juheinah in better order than ever I have seen; and old Dakhilallah has grown grey in successful *ghazzus*, and is as careful and astute as any raider could be.

It also showed that Garland mines, properly laid, are impossible for the Turks to detect. Eleven men searched for my mine for twenty minutes. Also that the Turkish garrisons suffer badly from nerves; and that a machine-gun party to deal with stranded locomotives may require great mobility in retreat or advance, and should be, if possible, mounted on the same kind of animal as the tribal escort.

T.E.L.

## XX. NOTES ON HEJAZ AFFAIRS

[Arab Bulletin, 13 May 1917]

Under date April 26, Captain LAWRENCE sends the following notes on miscellaneous topics. They were collected by him during his sojourn with ABDULLAH in Wadi Ais.

### *Antecedents of the Hejaz Revolt*

TALAAAT, IN 1913, SHOWED GREAT ANXIETY ABOUT the situation in the Hejaz. Its subjugation and the imposition of military service there had been a favourite project. Mahmud Shevket and the Turkish Ministry generally looked upon the situation as disquieting, on account of the great hold Husein Pasha was getting on the people. This was the real reason of Wahib's appointment, and his withdrawal was a personal triumph for Feisal, who secured from Talaat a promise that Wahib would be tried by court-martial for infringing the privileges of the Hejaz.

Sherif Abdullah was regarded as the probable cause of trouble in the Hejaz, and to keep him out of it he was offered first the Wakf Ministry and then the Vilayet of Yemen. He saw the idea, and refused the appointments. Abdullah has a low opinion of Talaat's judgment, and regards him as brutal and ignorant.

The previous plan of Sherif Abdullah to secure the independence of Hejaz (as a preliminary to the formation of an Arab State) was to lay sudden hands on the pilgrims at Mecca during the great feast. He calculated that the foreign governments concerned (England, France, Italy, and Holland) would bring pressure on the Porte to secure their release. When the Porte's efforts had failed, these Governments would have had to approach the Sherif direct, and would have found him anxious to do all in his power to meet their wishes, in exchange for a promise of immunity from Turkey in the future. This action had been fixed (provisionally) for 1915, but was quashed by the war.

### *Hejaz Tribes*

Abdullah gave the eastern Ateibah (he has little control over them,

and they would probably not have come to Hejaz to fight for him, had he asked them) orders to help Ibn Saud against Ibn Rashid. It was partly on account of this that Ibn Rashid declared war on the Sherif. Abdullah doesn't really care at all if they help Ibn Saud or not; but the order was an assumption of control over all the Ateibah (which Abdullah pretends to) in a form to which Ibn Saud could hardly object with grace.

The Turks gave decorations to Aida, Towala, and Fagir (Fuqara) Sheikhs. The recipients decided to show their new orders to Sidi Abdullah, but, as they were crossing the line near Toweira, they ran into a Turkish patrol, and the camel carrying their personal baggage was killed and had to be abandoned. The Turks have thus received back their insignia.

The Ateibah believe that Christians wear hats so that the projecting brims may intervene between their eyes and the uncongenial sight of God.

Dakhilallah el-Gadhi, who has had good means of judging, regards the Billi as less than half the strength of the Juheinah, and a little less than the tribes under Ferhan el-Aida. Ferhan (who is with Abdullah) is the son of Motlog Allayda, Doughty's old host. Dakhilallah says that Billi and Huweitat are much fiercer fighters than Wuld Ali or Ateibah. Indeed, I notice a contempt for the Ateibah among the Juheinah, and think that there is a good deal of justification for the feeling.

## XXI. WEJH TO WADI AIS AND BACK

[Arab Bulletin, 23 May 1917]

### I.—*Wejh to Wadi Ais via the Darb el-Gara*

**I** LEFT WEJH AT 9 P.M. ON MARCH 10, WITH FOUR AGEYL and four Rifaa Juheinah, for Sidi Abdullah's camp. We went out along the Khauthla road as far as J. Jidra (el-Nebadein; but the northern hill of the two), at 12.30 a.m. We then bore off right from the Khauthla road, across a sanded area of rough stones. This lasted only till 12.50 a.m., when we entered a wadi, crossed it, and

passed over others and their tributaries till 1.15 a.m., when we stopped in Seil Arja, which runs down to Munaibura. The going for the last hour was rough.

March 11

Started at 6 a.m. up a tributary of Seil Arja, and continued in it till 6.30 a.m., when we reached the head of the valley and entered a plain, about a mile wide. At 6.45 a.m. the road forked and we went right downhill, at  $140^{\circ}$ , into Seil Mismah, at 7.10 a.m. Mismah runs into Arja and Munaibura. We crossed it and rode up a side-valley (rough in parts) to a watershed at 7.40 a.m., and a steep descent of a few minutes into a great sand and gravel plain. Across this we went at  $110^{\circ}$  till 8.15 a.m., when we crossed Wadi el-Murra, which runs into the Sebakha at Kurna; J. Murra was about three miles away to the north. At 10.10 a.m. we reached Wadi Abu Ajaj, running from  $20^{\circ}$  to  $200^{\circ}$ ; it is not one bed, but a whole system of *seils*, all shallow and bushy, with soft sandy water-courses winding about them. About three miles away on the right lay J. Ajwi, overlooking Mersa Zaam. Ajwi is a very unmistakable square-sided flat-topped coral reef. We stopped at 10.45 a.m. in Wadi Abu Ajaj and started again at 12.45 p.m. At 1.30 p.m. I was abreast of J. Tibgila, about five miles off, and at 1.50 p.m. and 2.5 p.m. crossed the branches of Wadi Ghorban, which passes just south of Tibgila. The going across the plain was at first soft, and later rather more solid, but with very soft sandy valleys, which would be bad for cars. The guide now took us too far east, and the path entered the lower spurs of J. Raal, so that we did not enter the Hamdh valley till 4 p.m. We bore across this to the *ghadir* at Abu Zereibat, which we reached at 6 p.m. It was little, if any, smaller than it had been in January last.

March 12

Started at 3.45 a.m. and proceeded to lose the road in the dark. At 4.30 a.m. we entered low rough hills, J. Agumma, till 5.20 a.m., when we turned to the right up Seil Aguna at  $135^{\circ}$ . At 5.30 a.m. reached the watershed, which was easy, and rode down a short valley on luxuriant



colocynth into el-Khubt, at 6.10 a.m. Colocynth makes the best timber when crushed and dried. Its juice is rubbed on the feet to produce a purgative effect, which is said to be quite distinct, even when the drug is applied in this very diluted manner. Horses which will eat its stalks and leaves can go without water for a considerable time.

El-Khubt is a great plain, draining at its extremity into Wadi Hamdh near Abu Zereibat. A road goes up it to Um Lejj. We crossed it diagonally, aiming for el-Sukhur (wrongly called J. Arban on the map). At 7.15 a.m. we reached the east bank of el-Khubt, and turned right, up a side-valley, for ten minutes, on to the plain (Magrah) of el-Darraaj, a scrub-covered area leading right up to the feet of el-Sukhur. We halted at 7.40 a.m. in the middle of a rain shower, which lasted intermittently from 6 till 8.30 a.m. In el-Darraaj were some half-dozen tents of Waish Billi, with sheep, goats, horses and camels. There has been no rain to speak of in the Bluwiya this year, and plenty in the Juheiniya, and, therefore, many of the Billi have come over the border peaceably to pasture. These tents were watering from Heiran.

We left el-Darraaj halt at 10 a.m. and moved across to the feet of the Sukhur. We wound up a valley till we were between them and the isolated Sakhara south-west of them, and then scrambled for fifteen minutes up rock shelves and along faults over a knife ridge and down a stony bed, past a huge boulder all hammered over with tribal marks, into the basin of Wadi Heiran. The Sukhur are huge striated masses of a reddish coloured volcanic rock, grey on the surface; the Sakhara is like a brown water-melon standing on end: on its south and east faces it is absolutely smooth, and dome-headed, polished till it shines, with fine cracks running up and across it, like seams. The height above the plain must be about 700 feet.

At 11.5 a.m. we were over this pass and in a narrow valley, between granite outcrops. This led into another valley, and so to another, till we entered Wadi Heiran (40° to 200°, its course) at noon. The well lay some way on our right, down the valley. We crossed the valley, rode up a tributary, and then till 12.45 p.m. went up and down over granite shards piled up in tiny 50-foot mounds all round us in wild confusion.

There was no road and we kept no direction, but wandered where we could. Wadis ran in and out everywhere.

At 12.45 p.m. we descended sharply into Seil Dhrufi, a wooded valley 100 yards wide, along which we went at 120°. At 1.30 p.m. we got to the head of our branch of the valley, and ascended a narrow and difficult hill-path, with broken steps of rock, difficult for camels, round a shoulder of Jebel Dhrufi (it is a range) to a saddle from which a steep but short descent led into and across a valley sweeping down from north-east towards the sea. The ground again became a confusion of small mounds and valleys till a new watershed was reached at 1.40 p.m. This was easy and led us to a big valley running south; we bent on the left at right angles close by the rock-wall down which we had come. We turned up this gorge, which grew very narrow, and the path soon left the bed and began to climb the side of the hill to the north. The ascent was very steep, unfit for laden camels, owing to the rough surface and the narrowness of the path, between very sharp slopes above and below. At 2.20 p.m. we reached the watershed and descended a sandy valley into W. Hanbal, a large well-wooded tributary of W. Heiran. We stopped for twenty minutes to gather for the camels the luxuriant grass in a little sandy bay of the hills and then crossed the wadi and marched up a tributary of its east bank, W. Kitan. This is a stony valley with a good hard surface (no rocks), about 300 yards wide from hill to hill, and well wooded with thorn trees. We marched up till 4.15 p.m. and then halted; the valley had drawn in a little in the last half-hour. The hills on the south were small; but to the north is a very large hill, J. Jidwa, about six miles long and perhaps three miles distant, flanking the valley with a steep and high hog's back, running nearly north and south.

*March 13*

Started at 3.30 a.m. and reached the head of W. Kitan in a few minutes and went over a narrow pass between rock masses (steep but not difficult; too narrow for wheels) into Seil Jidha, which runs into W. Amk. It has sharp hills each side. At 4.30 a.m. we diverged to the right

up a gorge running south. This was from eight to ten feet wide between its cliffs, but the bed of the torrent was all encumbered with fallen stones and trees, so that the passage was difficult. At 4.50 a.m. we reached its head and found a gentle valley running away south. At 4.50 a.m., when the Wadi turned west about a mile above Bir Reimi, which is only *themail* in the wadi bed. The water smelt one foul smell, and tasted equally unpleasantly but quite differently. We had high hills on the east and smaller hills to the west. We started again at 8.30 a.m., leaving Wadi Reimi by a side wadi to the south, which ascended to a gentle watershed, from which we had a fine view down the broad and green Wadi Amk, which passes through Khuff to the sea. This branch of it runs  $150^{\circ}$  and is bounded by considerable hills. At 9.10 a.m. the valley turned more to the east, and at 9.20 a.m. received a large feeder (on the main stream) from the north, and bore off  $180^{\circ}$ . We cut across the confluence, at  $70^{\circ}$ , making for the centre of a great hill in front of us. At 9.30 a.m. we found a side valley and at 9.40 a.m. went over a patch of soft white sand in its bed. At 10.15 a.m. we entered Wadi Dhuhub el-Amk, coming from the north to join W. Amk. We went up a side valley from it, with high hills on the right about a quarter of a mile off, and then climbed a sandy valley between piles of the curiously warped grey granite, looking like cold toffee, that one finds frequently in the Hejaz. This valley led us to the foot of one of these great stone piles, up which runs a natural ramp and staircase, badly broken, twisting and difficult for camels, but short. This brought us at 10.30 a.m. back into W. Dhuhub again, above its northern bend. We followed the valley till 11.38 a.m. (its head). It runs about  $120^{\circ}$ , has low hills on the right, and high hills on the left of the road, and is full of quite large trees; there are water pools in the gorges about it. There were a number of Merawin tents here and there, with plentiful sheep and goats. At 11.15 a.m. the valley narrowed and began (from being excellent smooth shingle) to get stony. At 11.25 a.m. it became a mere ravine, on the north bank of which an execrable track led us up to the watershed between W. Dhuhub el-Amk and W. Marrakh. The view from the crest was beautiful, but the descent dangerous. We reached the

foot at 11.45 a.m., and found ourselves in an absolutely straight valley, running steeply downhill at 130° towards a depression ahead, between two regular walls of moderate hills. At 12.25 p.m. a large side-valley entered on the right, showing, through its break in the hills, a parallel range a couple of miles away and broken ground behind. There was a corresponding (but small) break on the left. The hill walls then opened out in a double sweep like an amphitheatre of grey stone with veins of dark red brown granite running over them in up-and-down lines, looking like cockscombs, or a rustic scenic railway; and in front came down a steep black wall of *harra*, with a low hill of brown granite in the middle of the line. We halted at 1.10 p.m. under the trees, shortly after passing a pile-circle of uncut stones about forty feet in diameter, with a central cairn, and some small square piles round about it, outside the circle. These were the first stone remains I had noted (bar simple cairns) on the way from Wejh, but from now onwards to the mouth of Wadi Ais they were to grow increasingly frequent. In parts of the *harra* and its valleys are distinct remains of old villages and rough terrace constructions for cultivation. The Juheinah ascribe all these to the Beni Hillal, and never put up even a cairn of more than three or four stones themselves. Their only stone constructions are little square box-houses of the type they call 'nawamis' in parts of Sinai. These little places are made to shelter the young lambs and kids, and are put up, as needed, by the shepherd boys.

We have now got into a much more fertile area than the Tihamah or the hills near Wejh. My camel men got milk to-day in the Merawi tents—the first milk they had tasted for two years—and this plain of fine quartz gravel and coarse sand is all studded over with a stubbly grass, in tufts sixteen inches high, of a slate green colour, white at the tips. The heat is very great, but there is a faint cool wind, which, however, has little effect on the plague of flies.

I have with me a Syrian, a Moroccan, a Merawi, four Rifaa, and three men from Aneizah, Rass, and Zilfi respectively. The last describes himself as an eyewitness of Shakespear's death. He says he was with Ibn Saud's artillery, looking through his field glasses and very conspicuous,

since he was wearing full British uniform and a sun-helmet over all. He was therefore easily picked out, and was shot at long range. His helmet was taken into Medina, and publicly exhibited as proof to all Moslems that Ibn Saud was a traitor to Islam, and had permitted Christians into his country. There were great demonstrations in Medina, and the hat is still displayed in the Serai, with an inscription pointing its moral.

We started again at 2.35 p.m. ( $120^{\circ}$ ) across Wadi Marrakh, which runs out to westward to the Makassar just south of Harrat Gelib, and at 3 p.m. entered Harrat Gara. It fills a wadi, running north, and falls down in steps or waves to Wadi Marukh, where it is cut short. We had mounted its first terrace by 3.25 p.m., and found a small sand and grass plain in the lava of the second step. We then turned east, up Wadi Gara, which is one of the main sources of the lava flow. The lava was in a great rope, down the centre of the valley, whose water had cut for itself a deep bed in the granite each side. At 4 p.m. a stream of lava came in from the south, and we crossed it, and the edge of the main stream, and other side streams, very slowly and painfully till 4.50 p.m. The north bank of the wadi was a straight line of hills. At 4.50 p.m. we passed a first crater, of fine sifted black ash and earth, just south of the road, and at 5.10 p.m. halted at the tent of Sheikh Fahad el-Hamshah, who produced bowl after bowl of milk, till 10 p.m., and then rice and a dismembered sheep. Camels and men all very tired, for the going over the *harra* is vile. *Harra* looks like scrambled eggs that have gone very wrong, and affords the worst going imaginable for man or beast.

#### March 14

Started at 5.40 a.m., and at 6.25 turned  $120^{\circ}$  with the valley, and then sharply to the left up the slope between a group of cones of black ash from a huge crater to the south. At 7.10 a.m. reached the watershed (Ras Gara) and went down the eastern slope of the valley, passing the remains of what was perhaps a fort, of rough uncut stones, rectangular, about 40 feet wide and 100 feet long. Walls about three feet thick, and now not more than four feet high. Descent was very bad; at 8 a.m. left the main valley and stopped at 8.20 a.m., at the end of the *harra*, up a

side-valley, in the tents of Sheikh Mualeh, a relative of Fahad. We halted till 9.35 a.m. and then marched  $120^{\circ}$  till 10 a.m. when we reached the head of the valley, across remains of old settlement and fields. At 10.10 a.m. we had crossed a small spur into a tiny valley between hills, which led us at once to a kind of chimney, up which the camels had to climb till 10.25 a.m. It was dangerous riding up, and most of us walked. From the top there was an easy run down Wadi Shweita till 11.20 a.m., when it ran into Wadi Murramiya, one of the most important tributaries from the Juheiniya into Wadi Hamdh. The wadi is filled all across the middle with bristling *harra*, but a clear path exists each side. We marched along the west edge till 11.50 a.m., when we struck round a bay of lava, and camped under a tree in a grassy dell. In the hollows and sandy places of the *harra* you find wonderful vegetation, which affords the best grazing in the country. Flowers grow freely, and the grass is really green and juicy. The green looks the more wonderful in comparison with the blue-black naked crusts and twists of jagged rock all around. *Harra* seems to be either loose piles of fist- or head-sized stones, rubbed together and rounded, possible for camels; or solid, almost crystallized, fronds of rock, which are impossible to cross.

We mounted again at 2.15 p.m. and crossed the remaining *harra* in a few minutes to a flat plain, containing stone circles and cairns. At 2.40 p.m. this came to its end, and we turned  $125^{\circ}$  up an easy pass. At 3 p.m. reached the watershed (broad and flat) and entered Wadi Cheft, which is half a mile wide, straight, overgrown with brushwood and lined with hills. At its lower end (3.45 p.m.) was a field about a quarter of a mile square, ploughed two years ago. This was the first field I had seen in the Juheiniya; though many others are reported. The field ended in a *harra* which we crossed—the worst road yet experienced on the march. We have had many bad roads, but this is awful. The path zig-zagged across the *harra*, which is very deep and piled up and broken. At 4.30 p.m. we reached the southern side (it was going north) and climbed a low watershed into a smooth valley, which turned down towards W. Murramiya, at 4.40 p.m. We climbed a feeder for a few minutes, and then rode down into W. Murramiya. Its central *harra* was easy to

cross, and took five minutes only, and we then climbed up its further bank—it is here a plain about two miles wide, covered with large trees (W. Ghadirat Murramiya) till near the eastern hill border. Along this we marched, by a beautiful road, till dark. We could see the lava a mile and a half to our right, and behind it a break in the hills and high ranges in the distance. At 6 p.m. it got dark and a hill rose up in the centre of the valley. About 6.30 p.m. we crossed an imperceptible watershed, and rode down W. Tleib, till we stopped at 7 p.m.

### *March 15*

Rode at 5.30 a.m. down the valley, which became more and more green as it got lower. The hills each side were low at first, but then J. Elif on the right, and later J. Keshra on the left, raised the level. At 8 a.m. we passed a conical hill in the valley, below Keshra, and at 8.30 a.m. went over a low watershed into a parallel valley; at 9.20 a.m. this opened into W. Ais at Abu Markha, where the valley is about a mile wide, more thickly wooded than most Hejaz valleys, and with a great 30-foot deep water hole to an underground stream in its side. Wadi Ais is here sharply limited by hills on its south side, but is open on its north, with all the Tleib system of valleys running down into it. I found Sidi Abdullah at Abu Markha, just dismounting from his camel, after his march here from Bir el-Amri.

Time taken from Wejh to Wadi Ais: 47 hours.

Road was a bye-road, impossible for any but pack-animals and not for regular or extended use by them.

Average speed of camels about three miles per hour.

### *II.—Abu Markha to Wejh*

When Sidi Abdullah had made arrangements for a nightly cutting of the railway, I decided that I might return to Wejh. I started therefore at 6 a.m., with three Ageyl, and Mohammed el-Gadhi, with about a dozen of his followers. Sherif Shakir put us on our way for the first half-hour.

At 7 a.m. we reached the low watershed into W. Tleib, which we had



crossed on the journey down to Wadi Ais. We marched across Wadi Tleib, and up a steep side-valley to the north of Jebel Keshra. At 8.55 a.m. we reached the head of this, and went down an easy slope into W. Saura, turning a little right out of our road to some tents at 9.20 a.m., where we halted. They fed us very hospitably, and at 12.50 p.m. we rode across Wadi Saura, which comes from the east, and up a northern branch of it to the common origin of W. Osman and Wadi Bedia, on the eastern slope of J. Riam, at 2.5 p.m. On the western slope of Riam is the common source of W. Tleib and W. Murramiya. We rode down W. Osman (which is fit for gunwheels, except for about 150 yards at its head, where rock cutting would be necessary), twisting and turning with it, till 5 p.m., when, at a right-angled turn, we saw on our left Magrah el-Ithrara, whose western half drains into Murramiya. We halted at 6.15 p.m. in the mouth of W. Geraia.

Rode at 5.5 a.m. and at once Wadi Osman widened out. We rode across it to the tents of Dakhilallah at 5.55 a.m. We had to stop there till 1.35 p.m. while they prepared saffron-rice and a lamb. We then rode up a side-valley, and down into Osman again at 2.15 p.m. We followed it down (it was not so zigzag in its course as it had been yesterday) till 4 p.m., when we turned abruptly to the right, and found ourselves in Wadi Hamdh, which here flows in a narrow rock-walled valley, about 200 yards wide. The valley is bare at the edges, of hard damp sand. In the middle it is packed with aslam wood, the ground being leprous, and of a white salty colour, with soft bulging patches where bushes grow or grew. The water-beds are cut in a clean light clayey soil from one to eight feet deep, and in the central one was a *ghadir* (brought by W. Osman) about two feet deep, 250 feet long, and twelve feet broad. The water was sweet and good. Half a mile above the *ghadir*, Wadi Hamdh ran into Jebel Muraishida, and turned abruptly north to get round it.

Faqeir is said to be about seven miles up. From Ghadir Osman we rode at 6.30 p.m. along Hamdh, and at 7.15 p.m. were opposite the break where the road from Wadi Osman to Aqila ('Ugla) reaches the Hamdh. Our course now 280°. At 7.30 p.m. we turned 300°, and at 8.20 p.m.

diverged from the bed of Hamdh to the left, to sleep. Wadi Hamdh is clearly distinguished from any other Hejaz wadi (except W. Yambo) that I have seen, by the damp chill that strikes up from its valley. This is of course most obvious at night, when the mist rises, and everything glistens with damp; but even in daytime Wadi Hamdh feels raw and cold and unnatural.

Started at 5.20 a.m. along Wadi Hamdh. At 6.15 a.m. Wadi Murramiya came in on the left; it forms by far the best road from Hamdh to Ais, and from Wejh to Sidi Abdullah's camp offers the quickest and smoothest road. We rode down it, into the brushwood of W. Hamdh, where we found large pools of rainwater, some fresh, others gone very green and stale. We then crossed the valley, left Wadi Dura on our right (the confluence of Dura and Murramiya makes the plain of Aqila, whose brackish well is the only permanent supply in the district till Faqair is reached) and rode past Bir Aqila (on the left, in the Hamdh valley) over a low watershed, to the landing ground at Um Jarad at 7.20 a.m. From this point Major Ross's map is available. It is admirable. I rode till W. Methar at 10.15 a.m., camped till 3 p.m., and then rode slowly (one of us fell off his camel when racing and broke his arm and had to be left behind) till 6.20 p.m., when we halted, with a narrow gorge to the south in which are rock-pools of water.

Started at 5 a.m. Halted at 6 a.m. in Wadi Melha, north of the road, which contains good water pools. Rode again, 6.45 a.m. till 10.10 a.m., when we halted till 2.20 p.m. We then marched to Bir ibn Rifada in Khauthla, at 4.50 p.m. There are at least five wells in and near W. Khauthla, and about them are small plants of *dôm*-palm, one or two grown-up *dôm*-palms, and, at Bir ibn Rifada, the drying remains of the palm and vegetable garden that Suleiman began to make. The well water had a purgative effect on our camels. We rode again at 5.30 p.m. and camped between the Raals at 7.30 p.m.

Started again at 1.36 a.m. and rode till 8.45 a.m. in the south edge of Murra. From 8 a.m., when men and camels were all tired, it seemed fit to the boy, Mohammed el-Gadhi, to run races. So he took most of his clothes off, got off his camel and challenged any of us mounted to

race him to a clump of trees on the slope ahead, for a pound English. All the party started off at once; the distance turned out about three-quarters of a mile, uphill, over heavy sand, which I expect was more than Mohammed had bargained for, though he won by inches, he was absolutely done and collapsed bleeding from his mouth and nose. Some of our camels were very fast, and when racing in a mob, as we were, they do their best. We put him on his camel, at 11 a.m.; when we started off to march to Wejh at 5 p.m., he was quite fit, and again playing all the little jests that had enlivened the march from Abu Markha. If you come up quietly behind a camel, poke a stick up its rump, and screech, it plunges off at a gallop, very disconcerting to its rider. It is also good fun to cannon another galloping camel into a tree; either the tree goes down (Hejaz trees are very unstable things) or the rider is scratched, or best of all, is swept off his saddle and left hanging on a thorny branch. This counts a bull, and is very popular with the rest of the party.

The Bedu are odd people. Travelling with them is unsatisfactory for an Englishman unless he has patience deep and wide as the sea. They are absolute slaves of their appetites, with no stamina of mind, drunkards for coffee, milk or water, gluttons for stewed meat, shameless beggars for tobacco. A cigarette goes round four men in the tent before it is finished; it would be intolerable manners to smoke it all. They dream for weeks before and after their rare sexual exercises, and spend their days titillating themselves and their friends with bawdy tales. Had the circumstances of their life given them greater resources or opportunity, the Beduins would be mere sensualists. It is the poverty of Arabia which makes them simple, continent and enduring. If they suspect you want to drive them, either they are mulish or they go away: if you know them, and have the time and give the trouble to present things their way, then they in turn will do your pleasure. Whether the results you gain are worth the effort you put forth, no man knoweth. I think Europeans could not or would not spend the time and thought and tact their Sheikhs and Emirs expend each day, on such meagre objects. Their processes are clear, their minds moving as one's own moves, with

nothing incomprehensible or radically different, and they will follow us, if we can endure with them, and play their game. The pity is, we break down with exasperation, and throw them over. T.E.L.

## XXII. IN SHERIF ABDULLAH'S CAMP

[Arab Bulletin, 23 May 1917]

CAPTAIN T. E. LAWRENCE, WHOSE REPORT ON HIS journeys to and from Sherif Abdullah's camp, as well as on the two chief raids in which he took part, have appeared separately, sent also an account of his stay in the camp itself.

From this we take the following notes:—

Abdullah had a force of about 3,000 men, mostly Ateibah. These Capt. Lawrence thought very inferior as fighting men to the Harb and Juheinah, being unadulterated Bedouins. Their Sheikhs are ignorant men, lacking in influence and character, and they appear to be without interest in the campaign. They also knew nothing of the country they are in. Abdullah himself was leading rather an irresponsible hedonistic existence. His tastes appear to be pronouncedly literary. He takes great interest in the war in Europe and follows the operations on the Somme and the general course of European politics most closely (through Arabic newspapers which he spends most of the day in reading). [*Stayed Abdullah's camp March 15 to March 25. 1st boils: 2nd dysentery: 3rd 10 days malaria.*] 'I was surprised to find', says Capt. Lawrence, 'that he knew the family relationships of the Royal Houses of Europe and the names and characters of their ministers.' He believes that he could make himself supreme in Yemen. If he succeeded, 'it would transform the Sherif's state from a loose hegemony of Bedouin tribes into a populous, wealthy and vigorous kingdom of villagers and townspeople'. Capt. Lawrence adds, with justice, that all past movements of importance in Arabia have been the work of the settled peoples, not of the tribes.

Sheikhs Shakir and Dakhilallah el-Gadhi were the two outstanding personalities in the camp. Both are men of action, and the first has an

authority hardly inferior to that of the King or his sons. The Ateibah worship him. Dakhilallah is hereditary lawman of the Juheinah and possesses some science, speaking Turkish well. In fact, he was with the Turks up to December last and came down with them to Nakhl Mubarak. He seems to be a man of energy, resolution and persistence.

In regard to railway raids, Capt. Lawrence gives a rough list of those carried out during his stay from March 24 to April 6.

'March	24.	Bueir.	Sixty rails dynamited and telegraph cut.
„	25.	Abu el-Naam.	Twenty-five rails dynamited, water-tower, two station buildings seriously damaged by shell fire, seven box-wagons and wood store and tents destroyed by fire, telegraph cut, engine and bogie damaged.
„	27.	Istabl Antar.	Fifteen rails dynamited and telegraph cut.
„	29.	Jedahah.	Ten rails dynamited, telegraph cut, five Turks killed.
„	31.	Bueir.	Five rails dynamited, telegraph cut.
April	3.	Hadiyah.	Eleven rails dynamited, telegraph cut.
„	5.	Mudahrij.	200 rails blown up, four-arched bridge destroyed, telegraph cut.
„	6.	„	Locomotive mined and put out of action temporarily.
„	6.	Bueir.	Twenty-two rails cut, culvert blown up, telegraph cut.

The Turks lost about thirty-six killed, and we took some seventy prisoners and deserters during the operations.

From April 7 a regular service of dynamiters was begun, from Ain Turaa, working against the Mudahrij-Abu el-Naam section, and from Bueir against the Istabl Antar-Bowat section. Dynamiters have been ordered to blow up not more than five rails per night and do something

every night. The result of the first three nights' work was satisfactory, but no later details have reached me.'

In conclusion, Capt. Lawrence pays a tribute to Abdullah's sincerity and earnestness, while he thinks him not a military commander or a man of action in any way. He is too fond of pleasure and, in a sense, evidently too civilized for his present wild work. Capt. Lawrence, however, got him to do a good deal—to pay up the Ateibah (whose allowances were in arrears), to take an interest in his guns and machine-guns, to send out his dynamite parties, and to begin to prepare for a general move towards the railway. The report ends with an optimistic forecast.

'As regards the situation at Medina, I think the great bulk of the troops and practically all stores have been evacuated northward in small parties by rail. The programme for a route-march of the main body to el-Ula has (wisely, I think, for the Turks) been abandoned, and the fall of Medina is now merely a question of when the Arabs like to put an end to the affair. The Turks have little food, but so small a garrison that the question has less importance. No food is going in from the north, so that sooner or later starvation will ensue. Till it does, the Arabs will probably not enter the town, since the Emirs are all anxious to avoid warlike action against the place itself, for religious reasons.'

## XXIII. THE HOWEITAT AND THEIR CHIEFS

[Arab Bulletin, 24 July 1917]

THE HOWEITAT USED TO BE ALL UNDER IBN RASHID—a family which still exists in the Akaba in the Hisma, but is grown poor and weak. They were then for a little presided over by Ibn Jazi; and from this period dates their sub-division into discordant sections with independent foreign policies.

The Abu Tayi sub-section is the joint work of Auda, the fighting man, and Mohammed el-Dheilan, the thinker. It fell out with Ibn Jazi over

the latter's treatment of a Sherari guest of Auda's, and in the fifteen year old feud Annad, Auda's full grown son was killed. This feud is the greatest of the Sherif's difficulties in the operations lately at Maan and has driven Hamed el-Arar, the 'ibn Jazi' of to-day, into the arms of the Turks, while Saheiman Abu Tiyyur and the rest of the sub-tribe are at Wejh with Sidi Feisal. Auda has offered them peace and friendship at the request of Feisal; and it was perhaps the hardest thing the old man has ever had to do. The death of Annad killed all his hopes and ambitions for the Abu Tayi in the desert, and has made his life a bitter failure; but it is a fixed principle of the Sherif that his followers have no blood feuds, and no Arab enemies, save the Shammar, who are enemies of the Arab. His success in burying the innumerable hatchets of the Hejaz, is the most pregnant indication of his future government. In all Arab minds the Sherif now stands above tribes, the tribal sheikhs and tribal jealousies. His is the dignity of the peacemaker, and the prestige of independent, superposed authority. He does not take sides or declare in their disputes: he mediates, and ensues a settlement.

The head man of the Abu Tayi is, of course, the inimitable Auda. He must be nearly fifty now (he admits forty) and his black beard is tinged with white, but he is still tall and straight, loosely built, spare and powerful, and as active as a much younger man. His lined and haggard face is pure Bedouin: broad low forehead, high sharp hooked nose, brown-green eyes, slanting outward, large mouth (now unfortunately toothless, for his false teeth were Turkish, and his patriotism made him sacrifice them with a hammer, the day he swore allegiance to Feisal in Wejh), pointed beard and moustache, with the lower jaw shaven clean in the Howeitat style. The Howeitat pride themselves on being altogether Bedu, and Auda is the essence of the Abu Tayi. His hospitality is sweeping (inconvenient, except to very hungry souls), his generosity has reduced him to poverty, and devoured the profits of a hundred successful raids. He has married twenty-eight times, has been wounded thirteen times, and in his battles has seen all his tribesmen hurt, and most of his relations killed. He has only reported his 'kill' since 1900, and they now stand at seventy-five Arabs; Turks are not counted by



Auda when they are dead. Under his handling the Toweihah have become the finest fighting force in Western Arabia. He raids as often as he can each year ('but a year passes so quickly, Sidi') and has seen Aleppo, Basra, Taif, Wejh and Wadi Dawasir in his armed expeditions.

In his way, Auda is as hard-headed as he is hot-headed. His patience is extreme, and he receives (and ignores) advice, criticism, or abuse with a smile as constant as it is very charming. Nothing on earth would make him change his mind or obey an order or follow a course he disapproved. He sees life as a sage and all events in it are significant and all personages heroic. His mind is packed (and generally overflows) with stories of old raids and epic poems of fights. When he cannot secure a listener he sings to himself in his tremendous voice, which is also deep and musical. In the echoing valleys of Arnousa, our guide in night marches was this wonderful voice of Auda's, conversing far in the van, and being rolled back to us from the broken faces of the cliffs. He speaks of himself in the third person, and he is so sure of his fame that he delights to roar out stories against himself. At times he seems seized with a demon of mischief and in large gatherings shouts appalling stories of the private matters of his host or guests: with all this he is modest, simple as a child, direct, honest, kind-hearted, affectionate, and warmly loved even by those to whom he is most trying—his friends.

He is rather like Cæsar's tribe, in his faculty for keeping round him a free territory, and then a great ring of enemies. Nuri Shaalan pretends only to love Auda—but in reality he and the Sukhur, and all friendly chiefs also, go about in terror lest they should offend in some way against Auda's pleasure. He loses no opportunity of adding to his enemies and relishes the new situation most because it is an ideal excuse to take on the Turkish Government. 'To the Mutessarif of Kerak from Auda abu Tayi . . . greeting. Take notice to quit Arab territory before the end of Ramadan. We want it for ourselves. Should you not go, I declare you outlawed and God will decide between us.' Such was Auda's cartel to the Government the day we struck.

After Auda, Mohammed el Dheilan is the chief figure in the tribe. He is taller than Auda, and massively built, a square headed intelligent,

thoughtful man of perhaps thirty-five, with a sour humour and a kind heart carefully concealed beneath it. In his youth he was notoriously wild, but reformed himself the night he was condemned to be hanged by Nevris Bey, Sami Pasha's Staff Officer, and has repaid many of the injuries he once wrought. He acted as business manager of the Abu Tayi and their spokesman with the Government. His tastes are rather luxurious, and his ploughed land at Tafiieh and his little house at Maan introduced him to luxuries which took root among the tribe: hence the mineral waters and parasols of a Howeitat *Ghazzu*. Mohammed is greedy, richer than Auda, more calculating, deeper—but a fine fighting man too, and one who knows how to appeal to everything in his hearers' natures, and to bend them to his will by words.

Zaal ibn Motlog is Auda's nephew. He is about twenty-five, with *petite* features, carefully curled moustache, polished teeth, trimmed and pointed beard, like a French professional man. He, too, is greedy (of all Arabs I have met the Howeitat were the most open, most constant, most shameless beggars, wearying one day and night with their mean importunities and preposterous demands), sharp as a needle, of no great mental strength, but trained for years by Auda as chief scout to the tribe, and therefore a most capable and dashing commander of a raid.

Auda ibn Zaal is the fourth great man of Abu Tayi. He is silent and more usual in type than Auda, Mohammed, or Zaal, but the Howeitat flock to his side when there is a raid, and say that in action for concentrated force he is second only to Auda, with something of the skill of Mohammed super-added. Personally I have seen all four chiefs under fire, and saw in them all a headlong unreasoning dash and courage that accounted easily for the scarred and mutilated figures of their tribesmen.

The fighting strength of the Abu Tayi is 535 camelmen and twenty-five horsemen.

T.E.L.

## XXIV. THE SHERIF'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS

[Arab Bulletin, 12 August 1917]

ON JULY 28, 1917, THE SHERIF OF MECCA EXPLAINED at some length to Colonel Wilson before me his dogmatic position. He began by sketching the original tenets of the Wahabi sect—its puritanism, its literalism and its asceticism. After the Egyptian conquest of Nejd the sect fell away very quickly in numbers and enthusiasm, till of late years it was practically confined to Aridh. The Nomads, Wushm and Qasim had all weakened so much as to be practically Sunni.

About four years ago there was a sudden revival. The Sherif is doubtful as to whether this can be ascribed to Ibn Saud or not. At any rate, funds were obtained from somewhere, and Wahabite missionaries went up to Qasim, amongst the Ateiba, Meteir and Sbei, and into Mecca and Taif. The first tenet of the new preachers was that the orthodox Sunnis and Shias (especially the Shias), were infidels. The Emir of Mecca was as convicted a Kafir as the Turks. The constructive side of the new creed was curious; they preached an exaggerated fatalism: 'God does everything'; they forbade medicine to the sick, discouraged trade, building and forethought. A favourite saying was, 'If a man fall into a well, leave it to God to pull him out.'

The missionaries were at first successful in great part, and the Sherif took alarm at the prospect. He sent Sidi Abdullah rapidly into Nejd, and by a show of force recovered the Ateiba, and most of the Meteir, and bound them again to the Emirate of Mecca. He also seems to have taken steps to counter-preach the new dogmas in Qasim itself, and in a short time the second Wahabite movement appeared to have spent itself. It was, however, only dormant, and in the last year or so missionaries have again been issuing from Aridh, and agitating the neighbourhood.

Ibn Saud has increased the unrest by his military policy. He has called out his levies two and three times in the year, discriminating between town and town; from one he will demand a contribution of men; and

from another a composition in money. This has particularly annoyed Aneyza, Boreyda and Russ, rich and comfortable towns, fond of silk and tobacco, and not too fond of prayer. Their disaffection is wide, and the Sherif regards it as an embarrassment, since his ambitions extend to the limits of the Ateiba and Meteor only, and he has no desire to be involved in any question of the suzerainty of the Qasim towns. At present there is a sharp cleavage between Aridh and Qasim, which any external encouragement, or unwise internal act, might inflame into an open breach.

We then asked the Sherif about the position of the Shias. Towards the Wahabis, he said, they were extremely hostile. Other than that, he could not see in them any particular policy. They loved his family, since Shias have a greater respect for the person of the Prophet than have the Sunnis. Some such as the Zeidis and Jaafaris were, in his opinion, more reasonable in their attitude than the Shafeis who oppose them. The Hanefite objection to the Shias was political and not doctrinal.

He, in common with all orthodox Islam, was not prepared to deny the Khalifate of Abu Bekr, and regarded the Shias who condemned Abu Bekr, Omar and Othman, as mistaken. The Shias in India are largely heretical in their views, as are many of the Persian sects.

(The Sherif is ostensibly a Shafei. In this conversation he took up a middle position between moderate Shia and Sunni; it is generally believed that his real beliefs are Zeidi. Sidi Abdullah is nearly openly a Shia of the Jaafari wing; Sidi Ali is a Sunni, and a fairly definite one; Sidi Feisal is not a formalist, and tends to an undefined undogmatic position, more Shia perhaps than Sunni, but vague. They are all nervous of betraying their real attitude, even to their friends, and maintain a non-committal Shafei profession in public.)

I then mentioned to the Sherif that the Northern Arabs commonly called him Emir el-Muminin, and asked him if this title was correct and if it met with his approval. After a short reflection he said 'No' and made his refusal more definite later. He said that people ascribed to him ambitions which he did not possess; he had even heard talk of his reviving the Khalifate. He explained his position with regard to the

Khalifate. It was the simple Shia one (already impressed on me by Feisal and Abdullah), namely, that the Khalifate expired with Abu Bekr, and that any resurrection of the idea to-day was not only grammatically absurd but blasphemous. He will have absolutely no truck with such a notion. (Sidi Abdullah is weaker than his father in this respect. If he saw profit from the Sunni side in the assumption, he might do it, and cut the loss of the Shia element; yet, as matters stand, if the decision lies with him it is improbable that it will ever be adopted.) The idea of a Moslem Khalifate was, said the Sherif, suggested to Abdul Hamid by the British, and exploited by him as a stick to beat us with. Its exponents to-day were Obeidullah, Abd el-Aziz Shawish, Shekib Arslan, and Assad Shucair, four blackguards without an ounce of Islam or honesty between them, and its nominal holder, the Sultan of the Turks, was a pitiable laughing-stock; the invention had been fatal to Islam; it tried to twist a religion into a political theory and was responsible for unrest in Turkey, Arabia, Egypt, North Africa, Java, India and China. It had plunged Turkey into the present war, and caused the Arab revolt, and with this example before his eyes, and in view of his own policy of friendship with Great Britain, he could neither acknowledge another's Khalifate, assume one himself, or admit the existence of the theory.

The title Emir el-Muminin was one that a sincere Moslem might adopt. It made no pretence to any succession to the prophet, but was objectionable politically, on account of the word 'Emir'. It was no use being Emir, without the power or pretence of giving orders, not to a sect, or a country or two, but to the Moslem world. The main divisions of Shia and Sunni would unite under this title, but the smaller sects, and especially the alien congregations in India and Africa, would resent the implication of authority, as, no doubt, would the Great Powers.

His policy for Islam was to provide in Mecca and Medina for the honourable upkeep of the Holy Places, to facilitate the pilgrimage, and to issue Fetwas and Sheria decisions as required. The Moslem world must have a head, but it would be a less tempestuous body of thought if the head was the Sherif and Emir of Mecca, basing his right on the concrete

possession of the Holy Places, and on an authentic descent, not on a supposed implicit apostolic authority, inherited from an unbroken succession of Khalifas. His motives in rebelling against the Turks were two. The first is a political object; the liberation of the Arab world from Turkish domination; this he will effect without question of creed; Christian, Druse, Shia and Sunni meet on a common base of nationality, and must co-operate with him on level terms if the aim is to be achieved. His second motive was a religious one, purely Islamic in character; it is to provide for the Mohammedan world an independent sovereign, ruling in the Holy Places, of the Sherifian family, whose claims to the spiritual leadership of Islam will be so transcendent as to be generally admitted, but whose weakness in material resources (money, ships, and guns) will at once make him acceptable to the Christian Powers, and purge Islam of the lunatic idea that it is a polity, bound temporally to a single infallible head. His ideal is a spiritual city, not a theocracy. To attain this aim he must have temporalities enough, free of foreign control, to establish his claim to political competence, and must be delivered from the hierarchical theories which have plunged Turkey, the Senussi and Ali Dinar into suicidal jihads. His temporalities he will hold as King of the Arab countries, and his spiritualities as Emir of Mecca.

My personal opinion is that the title of Emir el-Muminin would not be repugnant to him, if it came not as his assumption but as the homage of his followers. It is generally used by the tribes to-day from Kaf to Kundida, and will apparently be acceptable to the Sheikhs of urban Syria. His present objection, that it involves the power of command in Islam, does not hold good, since it is as fair to interpret it only in a doctrinal sense.

As for the Khalifate, the sincere disgust he expressed of Abdul Hamid's bogus claims, and his only half-veiled acknowledgment of Shia tenets himself, made me certain that this opposition to the idea is a matter of principle. Further, I do not think that all the temptations of the world would persuade Sherif Hussein to run counter to his principles. His transparent honesty and strength of conviction (while they may prevent him distinguishing between his prejudices and his principles)

will at all costs ensure his shaping his conduct exactly in accordance with his promised word. It would be easy to influence him in coming to a decision, but once his mind is made up it would be a thankless task to try and make him change it.

He appears to hope that, by ignoring the political disintegration of Islam, he may be able to concentrate attention on its dogmatic differences and do something to reduce the friction between sects. His appeal would be to moderate Sunni and moderate Shia to meet together under his presidency, and try to restrain the extremists in their camps.

T.E.L.

## XXV. THE OCCUPATION OF AKABA

[Arab Bulletin, 12 August 1917].

**B**Y MONDAY, JUNE 18, WE HAD ENROLLED 535 TOW-eiha (of whom twenty-five were horsemen), about 150 Rualla (under Benaiah ibn Dughmi, Durzi's brother) and Sherarat (under Geraitan el-Azmi), and thirty-five Kawachiba, under Dhami. Of these we chose nearly 200, and left them as guards for the tribal tents in Wadi Sirhan. With the rest we marched out of Kaf in the afternoon, and on June 20 entered Blair, after an easy but waterless march over the Suwan. At Bair we found one well filled in, two seriously damaged, and a fourth unhurt: the Turks had come there a little time before with Hamd el-Arar, and tried to blow them in with gelignite. They used an electric exploder clumsily, and we removed many tamped charges from the sides of the still open wells.

Circumstances forced us to stay in Bair till Thursday, June 28. The time was spent in negotiations with Ibn Jazi and the smaller sub-sections of the Howeitat on the Akaba road. We also carried out demolitions against the railway at Atwi, Sultani, Minifir, and elsewhere. The Ageyl dynamitards were inefficient, and our supply of dynamite small, so that the demolitions were of a pin-prick character, meant only to distract the Turks, and advertise our coming to the Arabs. The staffs of two stations were killed, to the same intent.



From Bair we marched to El-Jefer, where we stayed till July 1. The Turks had been more successful in their efforts against the wells here, and we had some difficulty in digging one out. The water proved sufficient for about 300 men and camels, when it was obtained. The station buildings of Maan and Hamra are visible from El-Jefer, about twenty-four miles off, but the Turks did not realize that we had arrived in force, owing to the operations near Amman, undertaken at this time by a flying column of 100 men, under Sheikh Zaal. This led them to believe us still in Wadi Sirhan, and on the 30th they sent a force of 400 cavalry with four machine-guns, and Nawaf ibn Shaalan as guide, from Deraa to go to Kaf and find us. The Turks seem unable to discriminate the true from the false, out of the flood of news unquestionably brought them by the local Arabs.

From El-Jefer a flying column rode to Fuweilah, about seventeen miles south-west of Maan, and in concert with the Dhumaniya Howeitat (Sheikh Gasim) attacked the gendarme post on the motor road to Akaba. In the fighting some mounted gendarmes got into a group of undefended Howeitat tents, and stabbed to death an old man, six women and seven children, the only occupants. Our Arabs in consequence wiped out the post, but not before some had escaped to Maan.

This news reached Maan at dawn on the 1st, and a battalion of the 178th Regiment which had arrived at Maan from Zunguldak on the day before, was immediately ordered out to Fuweilah to relieve the post. The same afternoon we descended on the line at kilometre 479, near Ghadir el Haj, and carried out extensive demolitions till nearly sunset, when we marched westward, intending to sleep at Batra. On the way, however, we were met by messengers from our Fuweilah column, reporting the coming of new troops from Maan, and we swung northwards, marching a great part of the night, till we were able at dawn to occupy the crests of the low rolling grass-covered hills that flank each side of the Akaba road near Ain Aba el-Lissan. The Turks had reached Fuweilah, to find only vultures in possession, and moved to Aba el-Lissan, fourteen miles from Maan, for the night. The spring has been built round, and piped, and is much smaller than it used to be before the war,

but is still sufficient for perhaps 2,000 men and animals. The battalion camped next the water, and kept together in the bottom of the valley, so that we were able to take the higher ground (at from 400 to 600 yards range) without difficulty.

We sat here throughout July 2, sniping the Turks steadily all day, and inflicted some loss. The Turks replied with shrapnel from a mountain gun, firing twenty rounds, which were all they had. The shells grazed our hill-tops, and burst far away over the valleys behind. When sunset came, Auda Abu Tayi collected the fifty horsemen now with us, in a hollow valley about 200 yards from the Turks, but under cover, and suddenly charged at a wild gallop into the brown of them, shooting furiously from the saddle as he came. The unexpectedness of the move seemed to strike panic into the Turks (about 550 strong), and after a burst of rifle fire, they scattered in all directions. This was our signal, and all the rest of our force (perhaps 350 men, for some were watching the road on the east) dashed down the hillsides into the hollow, as fast as the camels would go. The Turks were all infantry, and the Arabs all mounted, and the mix-up round the spring in the dusk, with 1,000 men shooting like mad, was considerable. As the Turks scattered, their position at once became hopeless, and in five minutes it was merely a massacre. In all I counted 300 enemy dead in the main position, and a few fugitives may have been killed further away, though the majority of our men went straight for the Turkish camp to plunder it, before the last shots were fired. The prisoners came to 160 (three officers), mostly taken by Sherif Nasir and myself, since the Arabs in the Maan area are very bitter against the Turks, and are set on killing all they can. They have some reason for this attitude, in the slaughter of the women and children mentioned above, and in the previous execution of Sheikh Abd el-Rahman, a Belgawiya from Kerak. He was popular, and anti-Turk, but the Government caught him, and harnessing him between four wild mules tore him to death. This was the culmination of a series of executions by torture in Kerak, and the memory of them has embittered local opinion.

The Arab losses in the fight came to two killed (a Rualla and a Sherarat)

and several wounded, including Sheikh Benaiah ibn Dughmi. Considering the amount of firing, the confusion, the close quarters at which we were, and the Turkish casualties, the Arabs must be held to have got off very luckily. Several horses were hit in the cavalry charge, and Auda himself (in front, of course) had a narrow escape, since two bullets smashed his field glasses, one pierced his revolver holster, three struck his sheathed sword, and his horse was killed under him. He was wildly pleased with the whole affair.

Unfortunately, many of our prisoners were wounded and we had very few spare camels with us. Those who could hold on were mounted behind Arabs on the spare camels; but we had to abandon the worst cases at Aba el-Lissan, and of those we took with us about fifty died of heat, hunger and thirst on the road down to Akaba. The heat in the Hesma and Wadi Itm was terrible, and the water between Fuweilah and Akaba only sufficient for perhaps 200 men and animals. For the matter of food, Nasir and I had taken two months' supply with us from Wejh, and were now two months out; the Bedu had their own food with them in their saddle bags, but Arab rations are ill-adapted, in quality and quantity, for Turkish soldiers. We did what we could for the prisoners, but everybody went short.

From Aba el-Lissan we marched to Guweira (22 miles) after sending out a column which destroyed Mreiga, the nearest gendarme post to Maan, on the Akaba road. At Guweira we received the surrender of the garrison (of about 120 men), their intermediary being Hussein ibn Jad, who joined us here on July 4. The motor road is finished to the foot of Nagb el-Star, from Maan, but not metalled anywhere. As the soil is fairly hard loam, I think it should suffice for the passage of a series of light cars. The Nagb is very steep, with bad hairpin corners, and will require improvement. The Hesma is of fine red sand, soft along the track, but harder in the bed of the watercourse which runs down from the foot of the Nagb to Guweira. From Guweira we marched down Wadi Itm to Kethira (18 miles) where we overran a Turkish post of about seventy infantry and fifty mounted men, taking most of them prisoners, and thence we went on to near Khadra, at the old stone dam

in Wadi Itm (15 miles), where we came into contact with the garrison (300 men) of Akaba. They had retired here from the village itself (about six miles away) to be out of view of the sea, and on the line of retreat towards Maan. The news of our fight at Fuweilah had reached Akaba quickly, and all the Amran, Darausha, Heiwat and sub-tribes of the Howeitat near Akaba had risen, and collected round the Khadra post, which had held them at bay from their trenches with small casualties for two days. When Nasir and the banner turned up the Arab excitement became intense, and preparations were made for an immediate assault. This did not fall in with our ideas, since (*pour encourager les autres*) we wanted the news to get about that the Arabs accepted prisoners. All the Turks we met were most happy to surrender, holding up their arms and crying 'Muslim, Muslim' as soon as they saw us. They expressed themselves willing and anxious to go on fighting foreigners and Christians till they dropped, but with no intention of adding a Moslem enemy to the powers already against them. To save the Khadra garrison from massacre Sherif Nasir had to labour from afternoon till dawn, but he eventually carried his point (by our going ourselves between the Arab and the Turkish lines, to break their field of fire), and with the prisoners (now about 600 in number) we marched into Akaba on the morning of July 6. The astonishment of a German N.C.O. (well-boring at Khadra) when the Sherif's force appeared was comic. He knew neither Arabic nor Turkish, and had not been aware of the Arab revolt.

The situation at Akaba was now rather serious, economically. We had no food, 600 prisoners and many visitors in prospect. Meat was plentiful, since we had been killing riding camels as required, and there were unripe dates in the palm groves. These saved the day, but involved a good deal of discomfort after the eating, and the force in Akaba was very unhappy till the arrival of H.M.S. 'Dufferin' on the 13th with food from Suez. Before she arrived, Arab forces were sent northward to occupy the hills up to Wadi Musa (Petra), some sixty miles from Akaba, and southward to join up with the Beni Atiyeh, and reconnoitre the country with a view to an eventual offensive against the railway south of Maan.

## XXVI. THE SHERIF AND HIS NEIGHBOURS

[Arab Bulletin, 20 August 1917]

IN BULLETIN NO. 58 WE REFERRED TO AN INTERVIEW which Colonel Wilson had with the Sherif on the subject of the latter's relations with Ibn Saud and the Idrisi. We have now received from him a detailed account of this interview, written by Captain Lawrence, who was present. The Sherif, after explaining the misunderstanding caused by Ibn Dakhil, said that his relations with Ibn Saud for many years had been friendly, and he had no intention of giving offence in the manner suggested by Sidi Abdullah.

On the contrary, he had invited Abd el-Rahman, Ibn Saud's father, to come to Mecca for the Haj, and to reconcile with Ibn Saud such fugitives of the Emir's family as had taken refuge with him in Mecca. He hopes to hear in a few days that Abd el-Rahman is coming.

The Sherif also said that Sidi Abdullah was on the best of terms with Ibn Saud, and insisted that he went to Shaara in 1914-15 to assist Ibn Saud against Ibn Rashid. He also said that Abdullah's presence there had prevented Ibn Rashid from following up the victory at Jerab. This is also Sidi Abdullah's present view of his action on that occasion, and it is worth noting, from Captain Shakespear's reports before the battle (Arab Bulletin, 1916, p. 336), that Abdullah and Ibn Saud were in direct relation at that time.

Colonel Wilson suggested to the Sherif that it might be desirable to send letters officially to Idrisi and Ibn Saud, informing them that his assumption of the Royal title was not intended in any way to suggest interference with their internal affairs, and proposing common action against the Turks. He suggested that if Said Mustafa and Turki could come to Mecca as representatives of Idrisi and Ibn Saud, the relations of the three rulers could be put on a satisfactory basis.

The Sherif said he did not agree with him. He thought it unwise to raise the question of the inter-relations of the Emirates of Arabia while the Turks were still in possession of the Hejaz. His future policy towards the other Emirs would be guided, when the time came, by the

wishes of the British Government. For the present he intends to make no demand, suggestion, or protest to them, in any event. He did not believe they could harm him, even if they wanted to, and as for their co-operation with him against the Turks, they all had cause enough against the Turks, and treaties with the British Government, and if that did not move them, he was not going to try.

Later he said that Idrisi's promise of neutrality to Muhieddin in Asir had enabled the Turks to operate against the Beni Shihir, who had however repulsed them and inflicted a loss of twenty-five killed on them. He said that Ibn Saud's conduct towards Ibn Rashid was a disappointment, especially his recent retirement from Northern Qasim. He had asked Salih ibn Athil for the reason for the latter move, and Salih had replied that he was not in a position to explain it.

He mentioned that Ibn Saud had permitted the Turkish military envoys, with specie for the Yemen force, to pass through his country, on payment of £10,000, and expressed some disgust at the meanness which would break a treaty obligation for so small a bribe. He also said that the ruling family of Koweit was negroid, and that Mohammerah, as Persian, was hardly in a position to enter an Arab Confederation.

The Sherif mentioned later that the Ajman who had turned on Ibn Saud and killed his brother were now serving Sidi Zeid and Sidi Abdullah. He had no intention of making capital out of them; but he hoped, through Abd el-Rahman, to persuade Ibn Saud to make peace with them.

When asked what his ideas were with regard to Ibn Rashid, he promptly said that Ibn Rashid was a young fool with no will or policy of his own. The visit of Ibn Ajil to Abdullah, the defeat of Rashaid Ibn Leila by Zeid, and the interview between Ibn Rimmal and Sherif Nasir were then quoted as possible indications of an early submission of the Shammar to his authority, and he was asked what his attitude towards proposals of peace would be. He replied that when the time came, he would consult with Colonel Wilson and act in accordance with the wishes of His Majesty's Government.

It was evident throughout the interview that the Sherif has no intention



at all of adjusting the relations of the Hejaz Government with the Emirs of Arabia until after the fall of Medina. He said quite frankly that they were not going to do him good or harm at present, and felt that his position would then be sufficiently improved to give him the advantage in negotiation. He insisted at the same time upon his good personal relations with the various rulers, and seemed to anticipate no difficulty in arriving eventually at an agreement with them, agreeable to the wishes of the British Government.

## XXVII. TWENTY-SEVEN ARTICLES

[Arab Bulletin, 20 August 1917]

THE FOLLOWING NOTES HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED IN commandment form for greater clarity and to save words. They are, however, only my personal conclusions, arrived at gradually while I worked in the Hejaz and now put on paper as stalking horses for beginners in the Arab armies. They are meant to apply only to Bedu; townspeople or Syrians require totally different treatment. They are of course not suitable to any other person's need, or applicable unchanged in any particular situation. Handling Hejaz Arabs is an art, not a science, with exceptions and no obvious rules. At the same time we have a great chance there; the Sherif trusts us, and has given us the position (towards his Government) which the Germans wanted to win in Turkey. If we are tactful, we can at once retain his goodwill and carry out our job, but to succeed we have got to put into it all the interest and skill we possess.

1. Go easy just for the first few weeks. A bad start is difficult to atone for, and the Arabs form their judgments on externals that we ignore. When you have reached the inner circle in a tribe, you can do as you please with yourself and them.

2. Learn all you can about your Ashraf and Bedu. Get to know their families, clans and tribes, friends and enemies, wells, hills and roads. Do all this by listening and by indirect inquiry. Do not ask questions.



Get to speak their dialect of Arabic, not yours. Until you can understand their allusions, avoid getting deep into conversation, or you will drop bricks. Be a little stiff at first.

3. In matters of business deal only with the commander of the army, column, or party in which you serve. Never give orders to anyone at all, and reserve your directions or advice for the C.O., however great the temptation (for efficiency's sake) of dealing direct with his underlings. Your place is advisory, and your advice is due to the commander alone. Let him see that this is your conception of your duty, and that his is to be the sole executive of your joint plans.

4. Win and keep the confidence of your leader. Strengthen his prestige at your expense before others when you can. Never refuse or quash schemes he may put forward; but ensure that they are put forward in the first instance privately to you. Always approve them, and after praise modify them insensibly, causing the suggestions to come from him, until they are in accord with your own opinion. When you attain this point, hold him to it, keep a tight grip of his ideas, and push him forward as firmly as possibly, but secretly, so that no one but himself (and he not too clearly) is aware of your pressure.

5. Remain in touch with your leader as constantly and unobtrusively as you can. Live with him, that at meal times and at audiences you may be naturally with him in his tent. Formal visits to give advice are not so good as the constant dropping of ideas in casual talk. When stranger sheikhs come in for the first time to swear allegiance and offer service, clear out of the tent. If their first impression is of foreigners in the confidence of the Sherif, it will do the Arab cause much harm.

6. Be shy of too close relations with the subordinates of the expedition. Continual intercourse with them will make it impossible for you to avoid going behind or beyond the instructions that the Arab C.O. has given them on your advice, and in so disclosing the weakness of his position you altogether destroy your own.

7. Treat the sub-chiefs of your force quite easily and lightly. In this way you hold yourself above their level. Treat the leader, if a Sherif,

with respect. He will return your manner and you and he will then be alike, and above the rest. Precedence is a serious matter among the Arabs, and you must attain it.

8. Your ideal position is when you are present and not noticed. Do not be too intimate, too prominent, or too earnest. Avoid being identified too long or too often with any tribal sheikh, even if C.O. of the expedition. To do your work you must be above jealousies, and you lose prestige if you are associated with a tribe or clan, and its inevitable feuds. Sherifs are above all blood-feuds and local rivalries, and form the only principle of unity among the Arabs. Let your name therefore be coupled always with a Sherif's, and share his attitude towards the tribes. When the moment comes for action put yourself publicly under his orders. The Bedu will then follow suit.

9. Magnify and develop the growing conception of the Sherifs as the natural aristocracy of the Arabs. Intertribal jealousies make it impossible for any sheikh to attain a commanding position, and the only hope of union in nomad Arabia is that the Ashraf be universally acknowledged as the ruling class. Sherifs are half-townsmen, half-nomad, in manner and life, and have the instinct of command. Mere merit and money would be insufficient to obtain such recognition; but the Arab reverence for pedigree and the Prophet gives hope for the ultimate success of the Ashraf.

10. Call your Sherif 'Sidi' in public and in private. Call other people by their ordinary names, without title. In intimate conversation call a Sheikh 'Abu Annad', 'Akhu Alia' or some similar by-name.

11. The foreigner and Christian is not a popular person in Arabia. However friendly and informal the treatment of yourself may be, remember always that your foundations are very sandy ones. Wave a Sherif in front of you like a banner and hide your own mind and person. If you succeed, you will have hundreds of miles of country and thousands of men under your orders, and for this it is worth bartering the outward show.

12. Cling tight to your sense of humour. You will need it every day.

A dry irony is the most useful type, and repartee of a personal and not too broad character will double your influence with the chiefs. Re-proof, if wrapped up in some smiling form, will carry further and last longer than the most violent speech. The power of mimicry or parody is valuable, but use it sparingly, for wit is more dignified than humour. Do not cause a laugh at a Sherif except amongst Sherifs.

13. Never lay hands on an Arab; you degrade yourself. You may think the resultant obvious increase of outward respect a gain to you; but what you have really done is to build a wall between you and their inner selves. It is difficult to keep quiet when everything is being done wrong, but the less you lose your temper the greater your advantage. Also then you will not go mad yourself.

14. While very difficult to drive, the Bedu are easy to lead, if you have the patience to bear with them. The less apparent your interferences the more your influence. They are willing to follow your advice and do what you wish, but they do not mean you or anyone else to be aware of that. It is only after the end of all annoyances that you find at bottom their real fund of goodwill.

15. Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.

16. If you can, without being too lavish, forestall presents to yourself. A well-placed gift is often most effective in winning over a suspicious sheikh. Never receive a present without giving a liberal return, but you may delay this return (while letting its ultimate certainty be known) if you require a particular service from the giver. Do not let them ask you for things, since their greed will then make them look upon you only as a cow to milk.

17. Wear an Arab headcloth when with a tribe. Bedu have a malignant prejudice against the hat, and believe that our persistence in wearing it (due probably to British obstinacy of dictation) is founded on

some immoral or irreligious principle. A thick headcloth forms a good protection against the sun, and if you wear a hat your best Arab friends will be ashamed of you in public.

18. Disguise is not advisable. Except in special areas, let it be clearly known that you are a British officer and a Christian. At the same time, if you can wear Arab kit when with the tribes, you will acquire their trust and intimacy to a degree impossible in uniform. It is, however, dangerous and difficult. They make no special allowances for you when you dress like them. Breaches of etiquette not charged against a foreigner are not condoned to you in Arab clothes. You will be like an actor in a foreign theatre, playing a part day and night for months, without rest, and for an anxious stake. Complete success, which is when the Arabs forget your strangeness and speak naturally before you, counting you as one of themselves, is perhaps only attainable in character: while half-success (all that most of us will strive for; the other costs too much) is easier to win in British things, and you yourself will last longer, physically and mentally, in the comfort that they mean. Also then the Turks will not hang you, when you are caught.

19. If you wear Arab things, wear the best. Clothes are significant among the tribes, and you must wear the appropriate, and appear at ease in them. Dress like a Sherif, if they agree to it.

20. If you wear Arab things at all, go the whole way. Leave your English friends and customs on the coast, and fall back on Arab habits entirely. It is possible, starting thus level with them, for the European to beat the Arabs at their own game, for we have stronger motives for our action, and put more heart into it than they. If you can surpass them, you have taken an immense stride toward complete success, but the strain of living and thinking in a foreign and half-understood language, the savage food, strange clothes, and stranger ways, with the complete loss of privacy and quiet, and the impossibility of ever relaxing your watchful imitation of the others for months on end, provide such an added stress to the ordinary difficulties of dealing with the Bedu, the

climate, and the Turks, that this road should not be chosen without serious thought.

21. Religious discussions will be frequent. Say what you like about your own side, and avoid criticism of theirs, unless you know that the point is external, when you may score heavily by proving it so. With the Bedu, Islam is so all-pervading an element that there is little religiosity, little fervour, and no regard for externals. Do not think from their conduct that they are careless. Their conviction of the truth of their faith, and its share in every act and thought and principle of their daily life is so intimate and intense as to be unconscious, unless roused by opposition. Their religion is as much a part of nature to them as is sleep or food.

22. Do not try to trade on what you know of fighting. The Hejaz confounds ordinary tactics. Learn the Bedu principles of war as thoroughly and as quickly as you can, for till you know them your advice will be no good to the Sherif. Unnumbered generations of tribal raids have taught them more about some parts of the business than we will ever know. In familiar conditions they fight well, but strange events cause panic. Keep your unit small. Their raiding parties are usually from one hundred to two hundred men, and if you take a crowd they only get confused. Also their sheikhs, while admirable company commanders, are too 'set' to learn to handle the equivalents of battalions or regiments. Don't attempt unusual things, unless they appeal to the sporting instinct Bedu have so strongly, or unless success is obvious. If the objective is a good one (booty) they will attack like fiends, they are splendid scouts, their mobility gives you the advantage that will win this local war, they make proper use of their knowledge of the country (don't take tribesmen to places they do not know), and the gazelle-hunters, who form a proportion of the better men, are great shots at visible targets. A sheikh from one tribe cannot give orders to men from another; a Sherif is necessary to command a mixed tribal force. If there is plunder in prospect, and the odds are at all equal, you will win. Do not waste Bedu attacking trenches (they will not stand casualties) or in

trying to defend a position, for they cannot sit still without slacking. The more unorthodox and Arab your proceedings, the more likely you are to have the Turks cold, for they lack initiative and expect you to. Don't play for safety.

23. The open reason that Bedu give you for action or inaction may be true, but always there will be better reasons left for you to divine. You must find these inner reasons (they will be denied, but are none the less in operation) before shaping your arguments for one course or other. Allusion is more effective than logical exposition: they dislike concise expression. Their minds work just as ours do, but on different premises. There is nothing unreasonable, incomprehensible, or inscrutable in the Arab. Experience of them, and knowledge of their prejudices will enable you to foresee their attitude and possible course of action in nearly every case.

24. Do not mix Bedu and Syrians, or trained men and tribesmen. You will get work out of neither, for they hate each other. I have never seen a successful combined operation, but many failures. In particular, ex-officers of the Turkish army, however Arab in feelings and blood and language, are hopeless with Bedu. They are narrow-minded in tactics, unable to adjust themselves to irregular warfare, clumsy in Arab etiquette, swollen-headed to the extent of being incapable of politeness to a tribesman for more than a few minutes, impatient, and, usually, helpless without their troops on the road and in action. Your orders (if you were unwise enough to give any) would be more readily obeyed by Beduins than those of any Mohammedan Syrian officer. Arab townsmen and Arab tribesmen regard each other mutually as poor relations, and poor relations are much more objectionable than poor strangers.

25. In spite of ordinary Arab example, avoid too free talk about women. It is as difficult a subject as religion, and their standards are so unlike our own that a remark, harmless in English, may appear as unrestrained to them, as some of their statements would look to us, if translated literally.

26. Be as careful of your servants as of yourself. If you want a

sophisticated one you will probably have to take an Egyptian, or a Sudani, and unless you are very lucky he will undo on trek much of the good you so laboriously effect. Arabs will cook rice and make coffee for you, and leave you if required to do unmanly work like cleaning boots or washing. They are only really possible if you are in Arab kit. A slave brought up in the Hejaz is the best servant, but there are rules against British subjects owning them, so they have to be lent to you. In any case, take with you an Ageyli or two when you go up country. They are the most efficient couriers in Arabia, and understand camels.

27. The beginning and ending of the secret of handling Arabs is unremitting study of them. Keep always on your guard; never say an unnecessary thing: watch yourself and your companions all the time: hear all that passes, search out what is going on beneath the surface, read their characters, discover their tastes and their weaknesses, and keep everything you find out to yourself. Bury yourself in Arab circles, have no interests and no ideas except the work in hand, so that your brain is saturated with one thing only, and you realize your part deeply enough to avoid the little slips that would counteract the painful work of weeks. Your success will be proportioned to the amount of mental effort you devote to it.

## XXVIII. THE RAID AT HARET AMMAR

[Arab Bulletin, 8 October 1917]

I LEFT AKABA ON SEPTEMBER 7, WITH THE TWO BRITISH gun instructors, and two Sheikhs of the Ageilat Beni Atiyah, from Mudowarra. My hope was to raise 300 men in Gueira and take Mudowarra station.

We rode gently to Gueira, where were a large camp, little water, and great tribal heartburnings. The three sub-tribes I was relying on were not yet paid, and Audah abu Tayi was making trouble by his greediness and his attempt to assume authority over all the Huweitat. It was impossible to get either men or camels, so I moved to Rum, five hours



S.S.E. of Gueira. There are good springs, difficult of access, at Rum, some pasturage, and the most beautiful sandstone cliff scenery.

At Rum the Dhumaniyah came in on September 12, mutinous. The situation became unpleasant, so I rode to Akaba, saw Feisal, and returned on the 13th with the promise of twenty baggage camels, and Sherif Abdullah ibn Hamza el-Feir, who tried to smooth over the local friction.

On September 15 the camels arrived, and on the 16th we started for Mudowarrah with a force of 116 Bedouins, made up of Toweiha, Zuweida, Darausha, Dhumaniyah, Togatga and Zelebani Huweitat, and Ageilat Beni Atiyah. Sheikh Zaal was the only capable leader, and Audah's pretensions had made the other sub-tribes determined not to accept his authority. This threw upon me a great deal of detailed work, for which I had no qualifications, and throughout the expedition I had more preoccupation with questions of supply and transport, tribal pay, disputes, division of spoil, feuds, march order, and the like, than with the explosive work which should more properly have been mine. The Sherif with me, Nasir el-Harith, went blind the first day out and was useless.

We reached Mudowarrah well on September 17, in the afternoon, after thirteen hours march and went down at dusk to the station about three miles further east. We got within 300 yards of it, but could find no position for a Stokes gun. The station is large and the garrison seemed to be between 200 and 300 men, and I was doubtful whether it would be wise to take it on with the rather mixed force I had; so in the end I went back to the well and on the 18th moved southward into sandy country. It is hoped to make Mudowarrah the object of further operations.

In the afternoon of September 18, I laid an electric mine, in about five hours work, over a culvert at kilo. 587, on the outside of a curve towards some low hills, 300 yards away, where Stokes and Lewis guns could be placed to rake the lengths of either north- or south-bound trains. The position was too high for the best machine-gun work, but the presence of a British machine-gunner made safety play advisable.

We slept near the mine, but were seen by a Turkish watching post near kilo. 590 in the afternoon, and at 9 a.m. on the 19th about forty men were sent from Haret Ammar (=Kalaat el-Ahmar on map Maan 1:500,000) to attack us from the south, where the hills were broken and difficult to keep clear. We detached thirty men to check them, and waited till noon, when a force of about 100 men moved out from Mudowarra and came slowly down the line, to outflank us on the north. At 1 p.m. a train of two engines and ten box-wagons came up slowly from the south, shooting hard at us from loopholes and positions on the carriage roofs. As it passed I exploded the mine under the second engine, hoping the first would then go through the culvert: the Lewis guns cleared the roof meanwhile. The mine derailed the front engine, smashing its cab and tender, destroyed the second engine altogether, and blew in the culvert. The first wagon upended into the hole and the succeeding ones were shaken up. The shock affected the Turks, and the Arabs promptly charged up to within twenty yards, and fired at the wagons, which were not armoured. The Turks got out on the far side, and took refuge in the hollow of the bank (about eleven feet high) and fired between the wheels at us. Two Stokes bombs at once fell among them there, and turned them out towards some rough country 200 yards N.E. of the line. On their way there the Lewis gun killed all but about twenty of them, and the survivors threw away their rifles and fled towards Mudowarra. The action took ten minutes.

The Arabs now plundered the train, while I fired a box of guncotton on the front engine and damaged it more extensively. I fear, however, that it is still capable of repair. The conditions were not helpful to good work, for there were many prisoners and women hanging on to me, I had to keep the peace among the plunderers, and the Turks from the south opened fire on us at long range just as the train surrendered, our covering force on that side having come in to share the booty. The baggage in the train was very large and the Arabs went mad over it. In any case a Bedouin force no longer exists when plunder has been obtained, since each man only cares to get off home with it. I was therefore left with the two British N.C.O.'s and Zaal and Howeimil of the Arabs, to

ensure the safety of the guns and machine-guns. It was impossible to complete the destruction of the first engine or burn the trucks. We destroyed twenty rounds of Stokes shells and some S. A. A. whose detonation kept back the Turks for a time. The north and south Turkish forces were both coming up fast, and our road back was commanded by hills which they were already occupying. I abandoned my own baggage and got away the men and guns to a safe position in the rear. Zaal was there able to collect thirteen men, and at 3 p.m. we counter-attacked the hills and regained our camping ground. We then managed to clear off most of the kit, though some of it, in the most exposed positions, had to be left. Sergeant Yells came up with a Lewis, and we retired ridge by ridge from 4.30 p.m. with no losses except four camels.

The Turkish killed amounted to about seventy men, with about thirty wounded (of whom many died later).\* We took ninety prisoners, of whom five were Egyptian soldiers captured by the Turks near Hadiyah, ten were women, and nine were Medina men, deported by the Turks. An Austrian Second Lieut., who (with about thirteen Sergeant Instructors) was on the train, was killed: only sixty-eight of the prisoners were brought into Akaba.

From 5 p.m. we rode hard northward, and on to Mudowarra well, at 8 p.m. We watered that night, without interruption from the Turks, which was good fortune, for the station is only three miles away and the Arab camels were so loaded with booty as to be useless for a fight. We left the same evening, and got to Rum on the night of September 20.

The promptness of the Turkish attack, the smallness of my force, and the amount of spoil made our retreat inevitable. I had hoped to hold up the line for a considerable time, and still hope that, with proper arrangements, it may be possible. The country about Mudowarra (whose station well is, I feel sure, the key of the Maan-Tebuk railway) is so bare of grazing, that the maintenance of a large blockading force is not feasible; but the water difficulties for the Turks make a heavy attack by them, if Mudowarra is once lost, improbable.

\* [The Turks admitted losing 27 killed and 42 wounded—Arab Bulletin, 21 October, 1917, p. 415.]

The Arab casualties were one killed and four wounded.

The mine was a sandbag of fifty pounds of blasting gelatine kneaded into one lump. It was set between the ends of two steel sleepers, in contact with each and with the base of the rail. Four inches of sand and ballast was laid over it. The spot chosen was over the south haunch of a three-metre arched culvert, and the contact wires were buried down the embankment, across a hollow, and up a low rocky ridge beyond. A naval waterproof detonator was used, as army detonators were not available. The burying of the contact wire took nearly four hours, since stiff single wires were supplied. A very light twin cable would be more use. It proved extremely difficult (on the score of weight) to carry off the wires after use.

The length of cable available was 200 yards, but for reasons of observation I had to stand at 100 yards only. The shock of the explosion was very severe, and parts of cylinders, wheels, pistons and boiler plating fell all over the place to a radius of 300 yards from the locomotive. The whole side of the engine was blown off and half the culvert brought down. People in the trucks complained of shock. Had I fired the mine under the front engine I think both would have been wrecked. One was a Hejaz locomotive and one a D.H.P. (Damascus-Aleppo Railway).

## XXIX. THE RAID NEAR BIR ESH-SHEDIYAH

[Arab Bulletin, 21 October 1917]

Report dated October 10, received from Major Lawrence, C.B.

I LEFT AKABA ON SEPTEMBER 27, TO TEST AN AUTOMATIC mine on the Hejaz railway. In view of the possibility of wider operations in October, I took with me Lieutenant Pisani, of the French section at Akaba, and three educated Syrians (Faiz and Bedri el-Moayyad, and Lutfi el-Asali), in order to train them in anti-railway tactics.

We marched to Rum on September 29, where we stopped three days.

Lieut. Pisani had fever, and I spent the time in showing him and the others the preliminary work of mining and arranging with Sherif Hashim, a Shenabra, who is O.C., Rum, details of the Bedouin force required. Feisal's orders to him were to go where, when, and as I wanted. In an endeavour to get over the difficulties caused by Audah Abu Tayi's pretensions, I appointed Sheikh Salem Alayan (Dumaniyah) to be O.C. Bedouins, and asked for only Dumaniyah and Darausha tribesmen, about forty in all. This number would have been enough to deal with a wrecked train, and easy to handle in the Faso district (for which I was bound), where the wells are small. However the enormous haul of booty in the train blown up early in September near Mudowarrah had completely turned the heads of the Huweitat, and hundreds clamoured and insisted on taking part in my new expedition. We had a great deal of difficulty, and in the end I accepted nearly 100 Darausha, and fifty Dumaniyah, including every Sheikh in the two sub-tribes. All others were refused.

A feature of the Huweitat is that every fourth or fifth man is a sheikh. In consequence the head sheikh has no authority whatever, and as in the previous raid, I had to be O.C. of the whole expedition. This is not a job which should be undertaken by foreigners, since we have not so intimate a knowledge of Arab families, as to be able to divide common plunder equitably. On this occasion, however, the Bedouins behaved exceedingly well, and everything was done exactly as I wished; but during the six days' trip I had to adjudicate in twelve cases of assault with weapons, four camel-thefts, one marriage-settlement, fourteen feuds, two evil eyes, and a bewitchment. These affairs take up all one's spare time.

We marched up Wadi Hafri (which drains into el-Gaa, N.E. of Rum, a central basin into which W. Hisma and W. Rabugh also pour) to its head near Batra, where we watered with some difficulty owing to scarcity of supply, and the numerous Arab families at the well. The area between Batra and the railway is full of Arab tents. From Batra we marched on October 3 to near kilo. 475, where I meant to mine; but we found Turkish guard posts (of fifteen to twenty-five men) too close to

the suitable spots. At nightfall, therefore, we went away to the south, till midnight, when we found a good place, and buried an automatic mine at kilo. 500.4. The nearest Turkish post was 2,500 m. away on the south. On the north there was no post for nearly 4,000 yards. The mine-laying took the five of us two hours, and then we retired 1,500 yards from the line and camped. On the 4th no train passed. On the 5th a water-train came down from Maan at 10 a.m., and went over the mine without firing it. I waited till mid-day and then, in two hours, laid an electric mine over the automatic. The Turks patrolled the line twice daily, but one may usually reckon on their all sleeping at noon. We then disposed the Arabs to attack the train when it should come, and waited till the morning of October 6 for one to arrive.

The line here crosses a valley on a bank twenty feet high, and 500 yards long. The bank is pierced by three small bridges, at intervals of about 200 yards. We laid our mines over the southernmost of these, took the cables along the track to the midmost (the firing position), and put two Lewis guns in the northernmost, from which point they were in a position to rake the embankment. From this northern bridge ran up westward a two-foot deep torrent bed, spotted with broom bushes. In these the men and guns hid till wanted.

On the 6th a train (twelve wagons) came down from Maan at 8 a.m. It arrived only 200 yards in advance of the Turkish patrol (of nine men), but this gave us time to get into position. From the open bed of the valley in front of the line, where I was sitting to give the signal for firing, it was curious to see the train running along the top of the bank with the machine-gunners and exploders dancing war-dances beneath the bridges. The Arabs behind me were beautifully hidden, and kept perfectly still.

The explosion shattered the fire-box of the locomotive (No. 153, Hejaz), burst many of the tubes, threw the l.c. cylinder into the air, cleaned out the cab, warped the frame, bent the two near driving wheels and broke their axles. I consider it past repair. Its tender, and the front wagon were also destroyed, with one arch of the bridge. The couplings broke, and the last four wagons drifted backwards downhill



out of fire. I was too late to stop them with a stone. A Kaimmakam, General Staff, appeared at one window, and fired at us with a Mauser pistol, but a Bedouin blazed into him at twenty yards, and he fell back out of sight and I hope damaged. (We have heard since he got back safe to Maan: he was one, Nazmi Bey.) The eight remaining wagons were captured in six minutes. They contained about seventy tons of food-stuffs, 'urgently required at Medain Salih for Ibn Rashid', according to way-bills captured with the lot. We carried off about a third of this, and destroyed another third or more. The Turkish killed amount to about fifteen. Some civilians were released, and four officers taken prisoner.

The plundering occupied all the energies of our Bedouins, and Turkish counter-attacks came up unopposed from N. and S. I rolled up the electric cables first of all, and as they are very heavy and I was single-handed, it took nearly three quarters of an hour to do this. Then two chiefs of the Darausha came to look for me. I went up to the top of the bank, hoping to fire the train, but found about forty Turks coming up fast and only 400 yards off. As the nearest Bedouins were 1,000 yards away and they were all on foot, driving their laden camels at top speed westward, I felt that it would be foolish to delay longer alone on the spot, and so rode off with the two Arabs who had come back for me. We all reached Rum safely on the 7th, and Akaba on the 8th, where I found telegrams asking me to go to Suez and on to G.H.Q., E.E.F.

The raid was intended as an experiment only, and was most successful. The automatic mine failed, but I proved able to keep 150 Bedouins in a camp 1,500 yards from the line for three days without giving the Turks warning of our presence, in spite of the regular patrols passing up and down the line. This means that the rank and file of the Arabs, as well as the sheikhs, did as I ordered. The complete destruction of a captured train, and annihilation of relief parties, will be easy, as soon as I have the Indian M.G. section to support me in the actual action. The Lewis gunners on this occasion were two of my Arab servants, trained by me in one day at Rum. They killed twelve of the enemy's casualties, but of course went off to get booty immediately afterwards.



M. Pisani, Faiz el-Moayyad, and Lufti el-Asali, are now, I think, competent to lay mines by themselves. I was very well satisfied with all three of them.

### XXX. GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES

[Arab Bulletin, 21 October 1917]

#### *Wadi Sirhan.*

MAJOR LAWRENCE HAS SUPPLIED SOME NEW INFORMATION about this important wadi, which affords the main channel of communication between the Hauran, Jauf and North-Central-Arabia. Kaf (pronounced Djaf), at its head, is grouped popularly with Wishwasha, Nebkh, Ithra and Jerjer, as el-Geraia or Geraiat el-Milh, on the ground of common possession of vast saltworks which seem to have escaped mention by European travellers. Major Lawrence found the wadi alive with snakes, of which some half dozen varieties, ranging from nine to three feet in length are poisonous. His party lost three men from snake-bites. It is particularly dangerous to water after dark, as the wells and pools are then full of snakes swimming about. In the daytime they are to be found in every bush. There and in the country to the south many ostriches were seen, but none was caught. Major Lawrence and three others breakfasted off one of their eggs, boiled over a fire of gelignite sticks (!): it was about a month old. They obtained a good deal of oryx meat and saw several of these heavy-headed antelopes, very suggestive of oxen. The Huweitat had a fine baby oryx in their tents. After the war it ought to be arranged that this interesting species be represented by live specimens in London.

#### *Maps of North-West Arabia.*

Major Lawrence, as a result of his journeys in north-western Arabia, reports that all existing maps leave much to be desired. The Arab Bureau Maan sheet (1:500,000) he found to be not bad as a sketch of the general lie of the country; but the railway, he feels sure, is shown too

far to the East, a mistake which leads to the underestimating of all distances from it in an inland direction. \* The Royal Geographical Society's 1:2,000,000 sheet he condemns for all the Wadi Sirhan and Jauf region, especially in its placing and spelling of localities. Miss Bell's traverse from Kaf to Seba Byar, the most important of the Wuld Ali watering places, he found to be good but too slight. Between Maan and Akaba he condemns all our maps, British, German and Turkish alike; e.g., an important watershed between the Hisma (he doubts the general application of this name to all the large plateau area usually so-called, and thinks it is to be used only of a single wadi) and Wadi Ithm, some eight miles south-west of Guweira, is nowhere properly marked. It is certainly very desirable to run a route-survey up Wadi Ithm, and to get the position of the railway fixed at several points between Maan and Medina. Major Lawrence's own route-sketches are not yet to hand.

### XXXI. A RAID

[Arab Bulletin, 16 December 1917]

I LEFT AKABA ON OCTOBER 24, WITH CAPT. G. LLOYD, Lieut. Wood, R.E., and the Indian Machine Gun Company. The Indians took two Vickers, and I took two Lewis guns with me.

We marched to Rum (October 25) and thence across El-Gaa and up W. Hafir to near Batra. We crossed the railway just south of Bir el-Shedia and reached el-Jefer on October 28. Capt. Lloyd returned to Akaba from there. Sherif Ali ibn Husein overtook us, and the party marched to Bair, picked up Sheikh Mifleh el-Zebn and fifteen Sukhur and reached Amri on November 2. On November 5 we camped at Kseir el-Hallabat, and on the 7th failed to rush the bridge at Tell el-Shehab, and returned to Kseir. Thence the Indian M.G. Company with Lieut. Wood, returned to Azrak. I went with sixty Arabs to Minefir, blew up

\*[The position of the Hejaz Railway was subsequently found by surveyors to have been placed too far to the east on the maps (*Arab Bulletin*, 23 July 1918, p. 264).]

a train at Kil. 172 on November 11 and reached Azrak on the 12th.

My intention had been to reach Jisr el-Hemmi on November 3, but this proved impossible, since rain had made the Jaulaan plain too slippery for our camels, and the Turks had put hundreds of woodcutters in the Irbid hills. This closed both the north and south roads, and left Tell el-Shehab (Bridge 14) the only approachable bridge in the Yarmuk valley. My first plan was to rush it by camel marches of fifty miles a day. This idea also failed, since by their best efforts the Indian Machine Gun Company were only able to do thirty to thirty-five miles a day, and even this pace cut up their camels very quickly, owing to their inexperience. They all did their best, and gave me no trouble at all, but were simply unable to march fast.

I decided, therefore, to raise an Arab force, and descend on the bridge in strength. The Abu Tayi refused to come, only fifteen Sukhur would take it on, and I had to rely mainly on thirty Serahin recruits at Azrak. They were untried men and proved little use at the pinch. For the last stage to the bridge, as hard riding was involved, I picked out six of the Indians, with their officer, and we got actually to the bridge at midnight on November 7. It is a position of some strength, but could, I think, be rushed by twenty decent men. The Indians with me were too few to attempt it, and the Serahin, as soon as the Turks opened fire, dumped their dynamite into the valley and bolted. In the circumstances I called everyone off as quickly as possible and went back to Kseir el-Hallabat. The Indians with us were very tired with the ride, which was a fairly fast one, of ninety miles in twenty-two hours. The Bedu and the Sherif wanted to do something more before returning to Azrak, and had the Indians been fitter, we could have put in a useful raid; but they were tired and had only half a day's ration left, since all extra stuff has been placed at Azrak.

The situation was explained to the Sherif, who said it would be enough to mine a train, without making a machine gun attack upon it. The Bedu agreed, and we went off together. The party was composed of Sherif Ali with ten servants, myself with one, twenty Sukhur and thirty Serahin. None of us had any food at all. We went to Minifir, to Kil.

172, where I mined the line in June last. As the Bedu had lost my dynamite at the bridge I was only able to put 30 lbs. into the mine, which I laid on the crown of a four metre culvert (about eighteen feet high) and took the wires as far up the hill-side toward cover as they would reach. Owing to the shortage of cable this was only sixty yards, and we had to leave the ends buried, for fear of patrols. A train came down before dawn on the 10th, too fast for me to get to the exploder from my watching place. In the morning of the 10th a train of refugees came up at four miles an hour from the south. The exploder failed to work, and the whole train crawled past me as I lay on the flat next the wires. For some reason no one shot at me, and after it had passed I took the exploder away and overhauled it, while a Turkish patrol came up and searched the ground very carefully. That night we slept on the head of the wires, and no train appeared, till 10 a.m. on November 11. Then a troop train of twelve coaches and two locomotives came down from the north at twenty miles an hour. I touched off under the engine and the explosion was tremendous. Something must have happened to the boiler for I was knocked backwards and boiler plates flew about in all directions. One fragment smashed the exploder, which I therefore left in place, with the wires. The first engine fell into the valley on the east side of the line; the second up-ended into the space where the culvert had been, and toppled over on to the tender of the first. The frame buckled, and I doubt whether it can be repaired. Its tender went down the embankment west, and the first two coaches telescoped into the culvert site. The next three or four were derailed. Meanwhile I made quite creditable time across the open, up-hill towards the Arabs, who had a fair position, and were shooting fast over me into the coaches, which were crowded with soldiers. The Turkish losses were obviously quite heavy. Unfortunately many of the Serahin had no rifles, and could only throw unavailing stones. The Turks took cover behind the bank, and opened a fairly hot fire at us. They were about 200 strong by now. Sherif Ali brought down a party of twenty-two to meet me, but lost seven killed and more wounded and had some narrow escapes himself before getting back.

The train may have contained someone of importance, for there were a flagged saloon-car, an Imam, and a motor car in it. I suspect someone wanted to go *viâ* Amman to Jerusalem. We riddled the saloon. The Turks, seeing us so few, put in an attack later which cost them about twenty casualties, and then began to work up the slopes to right and left of us. So we went off, and reached Azrak next day.

This mine showed that sixty yards of cable is too little for firing heavy charges under locomotives. I had first to survive the rain of boiler plates, and then to run up a steep hill for 400 yards under fire. By good chance it was impossible to carry off the wire, so the performance cannot be repeated till more comes from Akaba.

The march also showed the staying qualities of the Bedouins. They rode ninety miles without food or rest on the 8th, ate a small meal on the morning of the 9th and sat out hungry two nights and three days of bitterly cold wind and rain (we had not the satisfaction of being steadily wet, but were wetted and dried five times) till the evening of the 11th when we killed them a riding camel; after which they rode into Azrak cheerfully.

T.E.L.

## XXXII. ABDULLAH AND THE AKHWAN

[Arab Bulletin, 24 December 1917]

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOTES OF THE TALK OF SHERIF Feisal during a conversation which I had with him on December 4:—

It is not fair to condemn my brother, Abdullah, without reserve. He is taking no part in the war against the Turks, because his whole heart, his head, and all his resources are engaged in the problems of Nejd. He is king of the Ateibah and of part of the Meteir and Heteym, and is daily increasing his hold on the outliers of Qasim and Jebel Shammar. The responsibility for order in Western Nejd has always lain upon Abdullah. When my Father came to the throne he found all the border tribes in a turmoil, and Abdullah led expedition after expedition

against them (while I crushed the Idrisi, by the help of the Turks) until his name was feared from Taif to Shaharah, and all the chiefs of the Ateibah came to him for orders and directions. In those days we were beset by our religious enemies, the Wahabis and the Idrisis, and were fighting for our lives. After that there was peace until we had revolted against the Turks and marched to Wejh. Then again began troubles in Nejd. Abdullah garrisoned Henakiyah, and Ibn Saud took alarm. Once more he has sent out all his missionaries.

The name 'Akhwan', which you use is not properly applied to the converts. It began as the title of the brotherhood of preachers. Now it is used loosely of the disciples also. The Akhwan take over all the Sene-fiyeh tenets, especially the saying that Mohammed was a man with a message, who is dead. They add stricter rules of consanguinity, veil their women even in the house, are fatalists to a forbidden degree, and hold as first principle the law of Jihad, at the call of the Imam and the Ulema. I fear always that to-morrow, when the stress comes, they will reject the authority of the Koran (in the interpretation of which they differ greatly from us), as they reject the Prophet to-day. Their Imam is Ibn Saud, but the title is not significant; yet they regard him as the head of their *tarika* and submit themselves wholly to his orders. He pays the salaries of all the preachers, many hundreds of them; but the moving spirit of the whole is one of the Ulema of Riyadh. They appeal only to Bedu, and sow discord between them and the *hadhar*. Riyadh (or the *aalim* village near it) is the centre of the new doctrine. Eight out of ten Nejd Bedu follow the Akhwan, and the Taif branch is rapidly winning over the tribes of Northern Yemen. The Zobeir men are influencing the Shamiyah Arabs; one fourth of the Shammar have allied themselves to it, and only the energy of Nuri has kept it out of the Anazeh. The converts stir each other up to a pitch of extreme fanaticism, but their subjection to the college at Riyadh is absolute, and the college is the creation of Ibn Saud, who pays and feeds the preachers. He insists on peace at present, and is friendly to you. He suffers Ibn Rashid to exist till he has converted the other Shammar. When his time comes he will direct the force of the Bedu in turn against the settled peoples of

Arabia: taking piece-meal, first Qasim, then Hail, then the Hejaz, then Iraq and Syria, he will impose everywhere the new doctrine, and sway the peninsula.

Abdullah is making head against all this. The first step in his ambition is to win the Shammar, and in this he is making steady progress. He has lost the Heteym, who have gone over to the new faith; but his hold upon the Ateibah is very strong, and he is daily confirming it. Without the Ateibah Ibn Saud can never take the Hejaz. These measures are defensive, and so far as his means go, Abdullah is extending them. He is also carrying the war into Ibn Saud's camp, in Qasim, the weak point of the Akhwan scheme. Aneizah, Bureidah and Rass are comfortable towns. Their young men have enlisted in our, and the Turkish Government's, *ageyl*, and there learnt tolerance and the use of tobacco. They return after three or four years to their homes, and tell the people of the Hejaz government, where the savagery of the *sheria* code, literal with Ibn Saud, is softened by the humanity of the ruler to accord with the spirit of the time. In consequence the eyes of Qasim turn longingly towards us, and if the Qusman could, they would rebel against the Imam and his Akhwan. Ibn Saud usually keeps forces in their towns, to prevent this movement gaining force, and so Abdullah has to work secretly. He does not really want Qasim, but he wants to make Ibn Saud afraid.

If we can unite the settled peoples of Arabia under my Father's flag, we can strangle the new faith in the desert, until it becomes again a dogmatic abstraction, as the Wahabi faith was between Mohammed Ali and Emir Abd el-Aziz. If we fail, all our efforts and victories over the Turks will be wasted. Great Britain will not profit by the Arab revival, if the tomb at Medina and the Haram at Mecca are destroyed, and the pilgrimage is prevented. Abdullah is fighting all our battles, and if he has no leisure to campaign against the railway meanwhile, he should not be judged too harshly.

T.E.L.



### XXXIII. AKHWAN CONVERTS

[Arab Bulletin, 27 January 1918]

**A**MONG THE RECENT CONVERTS TO THE AKHWAN sect are Feisal, Watban and Lafi, of the Dueish section of the Ateibah. Parts of the Doshan got religion some months ago. Feisal became converted shortly after he had left Sidi Abdullah's camp. He has already sold off his camels, and assumed the white 'imama'. It is thought that he will settle in Dukhna, the Akhwan village shared by the Ateibah and Harb, but Suman and Dahana are other Dueish Akhwan colonies, and he might prefer either of these. Of the Hejna Atban, Sheikhs Nijr and Turki have gone over to the new Wahabi movement, with Bijad abu Khusheim. Ghalib and Ali el-Himerzi, Naif el-Jithami and Naif el-Rueis are also converts, while Mohammed ibn Hindi is suspected. Ibn Shleiwi has refused to have anything to do with it.

The converted Muteir are mostly living at Artawiya, which seems likely to become one of the headquarters of the militant Akhwan. Ibn Skeiyan, Mohammed el-Hawamil, Dheihan el-Lafi, Azeir el-Sfeini (of the Hawamil), ibn Sbeiyl of Athla, Mohammed el-Mizeini (of el-Gereiyat) and Mohammed ibn Mijal of Nifi are prominent Muteiri converts.

Of the Harb, Nahis and Feisal el-Dhueibi, Dhaar el-Saada, Zeid el-Hilali and Thellab ibn Ali are adherents. Some of the Furm sub-chiefs are rumoured to have joined.

All the above have been converted since 1914.

## XXXIV. FIRST REPORTS FROM TAFILA

[Arab Bulletin, 11 February 1918]

**T**AFILA HAD SURRENDERED ON THE 15<sup>TH</sup> AFTER A little fighting, and the number of Turks captured there was 150. Major Lawrence, writing from there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, reported that the inhabitants were divided into two hostile factions, who were much afraid of each other, and there was shooting in the streets every night. Flour and barley were very dear and difficult to find, and there was a serious lack of mules and camels. The Sherifian officers, however, were arranging to police the town and organize supplies. The situation was complicated by the presence of a colony of Moors, who had been besieged by the Arabs, and a party of seventeen [1,700!] destitute but, apparently, well fed Armenians.

A force of local Arabs, under Sherif Abdullah el-Faiz and Hamud es-Sufi, of the Terabin (adds Major Lawrence) had gone to Mezraa, on the Dead Sea, to block any leakage of supplies westwards from Kerak; while Sherif Mastur was going northward to Seil el-Hesa, about half-way between Kerak and Tafila. Letters have been sent to the Kerak Arabs, whose attitude was doubtful. Rifaifan, the head of the Mujaliyah, was believed to be pro-Turkish, but Husein el-Tura, the other leading sheikh, was secretly pro-Sherifian.

News has since been received of the occupation of Mezraa by the Arabs, who captured sixty prisoners, including two officers, and burnt a launch and six sailing boats.

On 26 January a large force of Turks from Kerak attacked the Arabs at Seil el-Hesa, where severe fighting took place. This resulted in a brilliant victory for the Arabs, who killed 500 of the enemy and captured 250, including Hamid Bey, the O.C. 48th Division. Only about fifty Turks escaped in the direction of Kerak, and all officers were killed or captured. The booty consisted of two powerful Austrian mountain guns, nine automatic rifles, twenty-three machine-guns (including fifteen German Maxim machine-guns) and 800 rifles. About 200 mules and horses were also taken and distributed among the Bedouin.

## XXXV. THE BATTLE OF SEIL EL-HASA

[Arab Bulletin, 18 February 1918]

Written from Tafilá under date January 26.

A TURKISH TEMPORARY REGIMENT, COMMANDED BY Hamid Fakhri Bey, acting G.O.C. 48th Division, and composed of 3/151, 1/152, a *murettab* battalion of 150, with a company of gendarmes, a detachment of 100 cavalry, two Austrian quick-firing mountain guns, and twenty-three machine guns, was railed to Kalaat el-Hasa station on January 19, and left Kerak on January 23 to retake Tafilá. The troops had been hurriedly collected from the Hauran and Amman commands, and came forward from Kerak short of supplies, and leaving no food and few men there.

On January 24, they came in contact in the afternoon with our patrols in Seil el-Hasa, and by night had driven them back into Tafilá. The Sherifian officers had laid out a defensive position on the south bank of the great valley in which Tafilá stands, and Sherif Zeid left for this about midnight, taking with him the sixty regulars and 400 irregulars (Ageyl, Bisha, Muteir) who had come with him from Akaba. The Sherifian baggage marched away at the same time towards Buseira, and everybody thought that we were running away. I think we were.

Tafilá of course panicked, and as Diab el-Auran (the busy-bodied sheikh) had given us ominous reports of the disaffection and treachery of the villagers, I went down from my house before dawn into the crowded street, to listen to what was being said. There was much free criticism of the Sherif, distinctly disrespectful, but no disloyalty. Everyone was screaming with terror, goods were being bundled out of the houses into the streets, which were packed with women and men. Mounted Arabs were galloping up and down, firing wildly into the air, and the flashes of the Turkish rifles were outlining the further cliffs of the Tafilá gorge. Just at dawn the enemy bullets began to fall in the olive gardens, and I went out to Sherif Zeid and persuaded him to send Abdullah Effendi (the machine gunner and the junior of our two officers) with two *fusils mitrailleurs* to support the peasants who were still holding

the northern crest. His arrival stimulated them to a counter-attack in which they drove the Turkish cavalry back over the near ridge, across a small plain to the first of the low ridges falling into Wadi el-Hasa. He took this ridge also, and was there held up, as the Turkish main body was posted just behind it. The fighting became very hot, with huge bursts of Turkish machine-gun fire and a good deal of shelling.

Zeid hesitated to send forward reinforcements, so I went up to Abdullah's position (about seven miles north of Tafilá) to report. On my way I met him returning, having had five men killed and one gun put out of action, and having finished his ammunition. We sent back urgent messages to Zeid to send forward a mountain gun, any available machine guns, and what men he could collect, to a reserve position, which was the southern end of the little plain between the Hasa valley and the Tafilá valley. This plain is triangular, about two miles each way. The opening lay to the north, and was a low pass, through which the Kerka road ran, and up which the Turks were coming. The sides of the triangle were low ridges, and Abdullah's charge had taken all the western ridge.

After Abdullah had gone I went up to the front, and found things rather difficult. It was being held by thirty Ibn Jazi Howeitat, mounted, and about thirty villagers. The Turks were working through the pass, and along the eastern boundary ridge of the plain, and concentrating the fire of about fifteen machine guns on the face and flank of the rather obvious little mound we were holding. They were meanwhile correcting the fusing of their shrapnel, which had been grazing the hill-top and bursting over the plain, and were beginning to sprinkle the sides and top of the hill quite freely. Our people were short of ammunition, and the loss of the position was obviously only a matter of minutes. A Turkish aeroplane came up and did not improve our chances.

The Motalga horsemen were given all the cartridges we could collect, and the footmen ran back over the plain. I was among them, since I had come straight up the cliffs from Tafilá, and my animals had not caught me up. The mounted men held out for fifteen minutes more, and then galloped back to us unhurt. We collected in the reserve position, a

ridge about sixty feet high, commanding an excellent view of the plain. It was now noon, we had lost about fifteen men and had about eighty left, but a few minutes later about 120 Ageyl came up, and my men with a Hotchkiss automatic, and Lutfi el-Aseli with two. We then held our own easily till 3 p.m. when Sherifs Zeid and Mastur came up with Rasim and Abdullah, one Egyptian army 2.95 mountain gun, two Vickers, two large Hotchkiss, and five *fusils mitrailleurs*, with twenty mule M.I., thirty Motalga horse, and about 200 villagers. The Turks were trying to shell and machine-gun our ridge, but found difficulty in ranging. They had occupied our old front line, and we had its range (3,100 yards) exactly, as I had paced it on my way back (this mountain country is very difficult to judge by eye). We mounted all our materials on our ridge, and Rasim took all the mounted men (now about eighty) to the right, to work up beyond the eastern boundary ridge. He was able to get forward unseen, till he had turned the Turkish flank at 2,000 yards. He there made a dismounted attack of ten men and five *fusils mitrailleurs*, keeping his horse in reserve. Meanwhile the Turks had just five Maxims and four automatics on the western ridge of the pass, and opened on our centre. We replied with Vickers and Hotchkiss, and put twenty-two rounds of shrapnel over the face of the mound. A reinforcement of 100 men from Aima now reached us (they had refused Sherifian service the day before over a question of wages, but sunk old scores in the crisis), and we sent them, with three Hotchkiss automatics, to our left flank. They crept down behind the western ridge of the plain till within 200 yards of the Turkish Maxims, without being seen, as we opened across the plain a frontal attack of eighteen men, two Vickers, and two large Hotchkiss. The ridge was a flint one, and the Turks could not entrench on it, as we had found in the morning; the ricochets were horrible. They lost many men, and our left flank were finally able by a sudden burst of fire to wipe out the Turkish machine-gunners and rush the guns. The mounted men then charged the retreating Turks from our right flank, while we sent forward the infantry and the banners in the centre. They occupied the Turkish line at sunset, and chased the enemy back past their guns into the bed of Wadi Hasa; where their

cavalry in reserve put up a check that was not passed till dark. Our people mostly gave up the pursuit at this point (we had had no food since the day before, and the cold was pitiful) but the Bedouins of Kerak took it up and harried the flying mob all night.

Our losses were about twenty-five killed and forty wounded. The Ibn Jazi Howeitat, under Hamad el-Arar, did splendidly, and the villagers were very steady and good.

The figures of the Turkish losses were given in the last Bulletin. Four more machine-guns have since been brought in, raising the number captured to twenty-seven.

## XXXVI. REPORT ON KHURMA

[Arab Bulletin, 9 July 1918]

IBN SAUD BEGAN TO COLLECT *DHIKAT* (A SEMI-RELIGIOUS tax) from some sections of the Sbei this year, thus reviving his custom of four or five years ago. Shortly afterwards messengers from the Sherif, demanding the same tax, were imprisoned by Sherif Khalid ibn Elwi in Wadi Khurma.

Khalid (a lean fanatical silent man, said to be more capable than his elder brother Naif) was made Emir of Khurma by the Sherif years ago. He was converted to the Nejdean Religion four years ago, and was last year confined in the Sherif's prison at Mecca. On his release on Abdullah's intervention, he paid a secret visit to Ibn Saud, an old friend of his father's.

The imprisonment of the Sherifian messengers was an act of war, and Khalid at once collected his followers. Only the converts joined him, and they were a mixed lot of Beni Thor Sbei; Jithima, Khararis (whose sheikh, Naif, is in prison in Mecca), Shlawah and Hamarza Ateibah; and many Kahtan. The Kahtan were those formerly in the East, who fled from Ibn Saud over the Ajman affair, and have since been living in the upper reaches of Wadi Dawasir. They are not in any way under Khalid, and have only joined temporarily, for the Religion's sake.

Khalid began by expelling the other Sbei, and all the villagers and freedmen, from Wadi Khurma, into the main valley Truba, of which it is a tributary. Wadi Truba (Tharba or Tarabat) runs south-west into a cultivated plain in Jebel Areysh, of the Goz aba el-Air (Joz Belair) district. Khalid proposed to instal converted peasants in the palm-gardens in their place.

His brother, Naif, then waylaid and killed four Ageyl, two Ateibah, and four women, Sunnis from Mecca on their way to Khurma for the summer. They refused to be converted, but nevertheless Khalid protested against their slaughter.

The Sherif now sent against them a very ragged force, comprising Hamarja, Biyasha, Sbei, Mowalid, Hedhlan (Hudheil) and other Meccan sweepings, with two brass saluting guns and two automatic rifles, under the incompetent Sherif Ali, brother of Shakir ibn Zeid. They were surprised by night on Bir Goreish by an inferior force of Kahtan, and fled without resistance, losing fourteen killed, and their artillery.

Khalid then repented of his action, and went off to Ibn Saud with fifty-four riders and his trophies, to beg for help. On his way he crossed an Ateibah raiding party, under Fajir ibn Shelawih, on its way to Dawasir. The two parties fought, and Ibn Shelawih took thirteen camels, four horses and the artillery, killing four of the converted, and losing only one himself. Khalid fled towards Riadh.

The Kahtan are not likely to remain long in Wadi Khurma, and Naif ibn Elwi cannot hope, with only the Beni Thor, to keep the other Sbei indefinitely out of their properties. If Khalid fails in his mission in Aridh, the complete collapse of his movement may be expected.

The Sherif hopes to enrol a new force in Mecca to retake Khurma, but is trying to conscript the town Bedouins at half wages, and in consequence has made no progress. Should he make further attacks upon Khurma, with the materials at his disposal, he may reasonably be expected to suffer further reverses. If, however, he acquires wisdom enough to accept the temporary loss of the district, and if Ibn Saud maintains his present correct attitude, then no extension—or prolongation—of the rising need be feared.



## XXXVII. SYRIAN CROSS CURRENTS

[Written by T. E. Lawrence in 1918, on Arab Bureau paper, but not included in the Arab Bulletin. From the MS. in the possession of Mr A. W. Lawrence.]

IT USED TO BE INTERESTING BEFORE THE WAR TO ASK a Syrian in French who were the leading spirits of Beyrout or Damascus, and a day or two later to ask him the same question in Arabic. You got two entirely different lists, alike only in that all were Moslem, since there are no Christians, in or out of Syria, whose 'nationalism' is more than a pretty name for a European control loose enough to give their co-religionists excessive place in the administration. For this reason Christians have no share in the political life of the country, and their voices and opinions are absolutely to be ignored.

The Moslems were divided rather sharply into the intelligentsia and the Arabs. The first were those who had thrown off Arab things, and bared themselves to the semi-Levantine semi-European fashions of the renegade Moslem—the Moslem who has lost his traditional faith, and with it all belief in all faiths. They spoke foreign languages as often as they could, wore European clothes, were often wealthy, used to entertain and be entertained by foreigners, and impressed themselves more deeply upon foreign visitors than their numbers or home influence warranted. Their political ideals were culled from books. They had no programme of revolt, but many ideas for the settlement after one. Such and such were the rights of Syria, such her boundaries, such her future law and constitution. They formed committees in Cairo, Paris, London, New York, Beyrout, Berlin, and Berne, to influence European powers to deliver them from the Turks, and lend them the sinews to go on spinning real dreams. Their habits made Syria uncongenial, and most of them lived in foreign countries.

There existed a bridge between these occidentalists and the classes that speak Arabic first and foremost. They were the translators, who were in touch with the foreign-veneered logocrats. They edited newspapers, and produced Arabic paraphrases of western political theories.

When war broke out they remained in Syria, believing themselves secure. They had preached the completed revolution daily in their press, but their hearts were shining—innocent of all intention of revolutionary processes. Their tragic astonishment when Jemal Pasha arrested them and hanged them as leaders of rebellion betrayed their harmlessness. They saw the real conspirators, men who day and night preached armed action against the Turks, walking freely in Damascus, and crowding to see them executed. Some took up the dress of martyrs, and died silently. Some in their bitterness told the Turks the names all Arabs knew, trying to involve the guilty with themselves in punishment: but mostly Jemal only laughed.

Thus by January, 1915, Syria was deprived of her Christian pseudo-nationalists, who were either silent with terror, or the Turks' best friends, of her Levantine-Moslems, who were reaping new delights abroad, in finding themselves taken seriously by foreign chancellors, and of her Arab-revival idealists, who were hanged and buried. For three years she has been a closed country, ignorant of the programmes made for her future in allied capitals, subject to the military autocracy of a particularly ruthless and unbridled dictator, and so forced to a more secret internal and intensive culture of such nationalist ideals as had real root in herself. Until the northern thrusts of the Sherifian army, to Akaba, and then to the Hauran, there was no outer door by which contact could be obtained with this re-born Syria of 1918, and only by casual indications could the force and direction of the new movements be guessed. Now that we can feel the full vigour we realise how jejune the former political groups have become, and how little they can claim to represent the feelings of Syria to-day. The Azm and Mutram factions go on blindfoldedly, balancing this party with that party, and offsetting this programme with that programme in memoranda and solemn interviews with European statesmen, while in the disputed country the Sherifians set their teeth and work, and the Turco-Germans bring down Abbas Hilmi into Asia.

This restoration of Abbas Hilmi may be called a renaissance of Oppenheim, and points to Germany's having at last gained a hand in Turkish

internal politics. The Turks tried to use Abbas Hilmi in the early days of the war, found him double-edged, and threw him aside. Now in their extremity they are forced again to admit him, knowing that it hurts them if he succeeds. Abbas Hilmi will not serve the Turks to suppress the Arabs, but only to elevate himself—by the Arabs—to the level of the Turks. He may do this with Germany's approval. Oppenheim with his very rich Semitic nature was always pro-Arab rather than pro-Turk. He fought the ultra-Turk party in Germany till the first year of war, and was beaten. Prussia allied herself with Enver to raise a Jihad, and her Arab friends joined Arab parties. The day of the Sherif's revolt justified Von Oppenheim, too late to help Germany, but soon enough to give him another opportunity. Turkey to-day is [too] feeble to serve Germany's ends in the world. The Kaiser must have friends in Islam other than Enver and Carasso, and friends in Syria and Mesopotamia other than Jemal and Sheikh Shawish. Oppenheim has set out to find her allies on the Alexandretta-Basra lines of penetration, in readiness for the after-war.

His first pre-occupation must be the Sherif. Abbas Hilmi is beloved in Mecca, but the Sherif based his revolt on principles which are above private friendships (even in the Near East where the personal element is nearly all in all) and till the issue of the war is plain, Oppenheim will not overtake our influence there. When the Sherif drew sword he told us what he wanted, and we raised no vital objection to his claim. Since then we have helped him manfully, and his kingdom has grown from nothing to 100,000 square miles (such miles, perhaps, but the Arabs like Arabia!). He has involved himself and all his friends in the risk of gallows if they fail, or if we fail, and has pledged his honour to the Arabs in the magnificent ambition of adding Syria and Mesopotamia to his dominion. If the war lasts long enough he wins, at least enough to fire Arab minds for many years with the picture of Arabia Irredenta. The dice of the great game between us and the rest, for Arab suffrage after the war, will be clogged against the alien owners of any such province: but the asset in our hands, our control of the sea, has been so seared in to the minds of the Sherif and his family, by the work of the Red Sea

Patrol during this war, that its importance will probably outweigh to them any sins of commission or omission, that we may accumulate.

Oppenheim's second effort may well be to try and divide the Arab house against itself. The phrase 'Arab Movement' was invented in Cairo as a common denomination for all the vague discontents against Turkey which before 1916 existed in the Arab provinces. In a non-constitutional country these naturally took on a revolutionary character, and it was convenient to pretend to find a common ground in all of them. They were most of them very local, and very jealous, but had to be considered, in the hope that one or other of them might bear fruit. The day the Sherif declared himself, ended this phase of the question. We had found one Arab who believed in himself and his people, and fortunately it was the noblest family of them all. Since then there has been for us no question of any 'Arab Movement'. We have supported the Sherifian movement, and have tried to help him gather into his own society such Arab side and sub-currents as his progress has encountered. Our exclusiveness has been justified, since to date no second Arab has had the courage to range himself independently against the Turk.

Needless to say the Arab parties are not all ready to welcome an imposed head. The renegade Moslems, the Christians, and all other sects (there are few parties whose real platform is not sectarian) are dissatisfied. Their arguments are specious, and not only persuade themselves, but give manoeuvre ground for Oppenheim (and indeed for all other powers who feel alarmed at our too great influence with the Sherif) to oppose us on the highest motives. 'The Sherif', they say, 'is Meccan and obscurantist. We are infidel and enlightened. Deliver us from him.' The Sherif, they imply, will be fanatical in religious questions, and crabbed constitutionally. The sacred words Progress and Nationality are to be ranged against him.

Unfortunately these charges are brought against the Sherif by parties ignorant of Arabia. The Sherif heads no religious revival, claims no hierarchical position. His revolt has divided the house of Islam, drawn the teeth of the Khalifate for a generation. His growth is the one factor

in our hands which can aid us to stem the new fanatical revival in central Arabia. His rise has killed the idea of Jihad, the very real bogey which has so often paralysed our action in the East. In Moslem theology he heads the old and slightly effete professional orthodoxy. Legally he is rather lax. Even in the holy cities he dilutes the Sharia; in the provinces he abandons it altogether, for customary law. For a first offence in Wahabi Nejd the right hand is cut off, for the second the tongue torn out, for the third the offender banished to a desert without food or water. In Mecca the worst penalty is imprisonment. For his northern provinces, whose complex populations and commerce make a simple code impossible, he has designated his more plastic son, Feisul, as administrator. His promised programme for Syria may not be sufficient to enlist him the support of Syrians in Europe and America, but the Syrians of Syria are enlisting by thousands in the ranks of his armies. Arabs in Egypt and elsewhere have spoken and written against him. Feisul will not hear of a press propaganda of his ideas: but no free Arab has yet fired a shot against him or his forces, and every advance of his armies is done, not merely by the consent, but by the actual brains and hands of the local people, in the strenuous field of rebellion. There is no 'Hedjaz force' in Syria. Feisul accepts any volunteer for his service, allowing him to preach what he pleases, and pray as he pleases, so long as he will fight against the Turks. He says always that neither England nor France nor Turkey will give over to the Arabs one foot of unconquered ground, but that each new village occupied, each new tribe enrolled by Arab effort, is one more step forward towards the Arab state. For him questions of its boundaries, the composition of its upper house, and the colour of its policemen's boots, can wait till the Turk is conquered. One may surmise, however, that his administration will differ rather in the spirit, than in the form, from the system which the Turks have gradually built up for their subject-provinces.

The Syrians abroad are as anxious as the Syrians in Syria to obtain deliverance from the Turk, but desire more elaborate reforms when he is removed, and particularly desire a leading voice in the decision of what these reforms are to be. They have a pathetic belief in the idiot altruism

of Britain and France. Themselves hardly capable of courage or unselfishness, they accredit us with little else. For their sake (or rather for their words' sake) we are to pull down the new (and to us rather comfortable) Moslem Power we have so carefully set up, to launch armed expeditions into Syria, expel the Turks, and police the country at their direction, while they exhaust upon it the portfolio of constitutions that Abbé Sieyès must have bequeathed to them. In return we are to have their gratitude, afterwards. The only difference between the Sherif's conquest of Syria and theirs (and they call it such a little difference) is that the Sherif achieves it by the hands of the Syrians themselves, and they wish it achieved by our own blood. They would so much rather the Judean hills were stained with London Territorials, dead for their freedom, to save them from the need of taking dangerous rides, . . . but from our point of view it may be argued that in these times of crisis our interests may lead us to support those who adventure their lives in arms on our side (even if they do not please all who call themselves our friends) rather than to rebuff the armed supporters in favour of wordy persons who claim to represent—behind our line—a higher form of culture. A spontaneous rebellion in Syria is an impossibility: the local people will take no action till the front tide of battle has rolled past them. If it is the Sherifian tide, they are enlisted by him, and serve at a later date to advance the allied cause another step. If it is our front line, they will get on with the ploughing of the fields, feeling no gratitude, and no obligation towards us. We have only given them the opportunity of unpunished politics, in the future. When the Sherif comes, neutrality is impossible, and their decision, as between Arab and Turk, inevitable. Our coming enables them to postpone for a season the necessity of rebellion, the gravest step that sedentary man can take. Not until the prosperity of foreign control has given them renewed leisure for politics, will the need for self-government revive. Oppenheim, and the financial interests that back the Mediterranean-Mesopotamian railway schemes would like to raise an Arab movement against the Sherif, since the Sherif is irrecoverably ours. If they succeeded in limiting the pro-British spheres to the Wahabis of Nejd, the Emir of



Mecca, and the Bedouin of the Hedjaz, they would have a plausible case for tying the town and village communities of Syria and Mesopotamia to the continental Powers for protection against these our friends, and could do it all the more freely, since the Arabic areas south of the Akaba-Basra line are not essential to anyone except ourselves. Their material interests are limited to the settled peoples, and if they can prevent our making ourselves 'founders' kin' to the Arab federated states that are inevitable among them, they will have gained a part of their ends. The moral element, the support of the head of Islam passed from them when the advance from Akaba closed the history of the Hejaz revolt. The success or failure of the Sherifian invasion of Syria—a new operation and a new movement—is going to affect the other phase of European rivalry in the Levant, by determining whose candidate is going to gain control of the trade routes and commercial centres of Western Asia.

### XXXVIII. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FOURTH ARMY

[Arab Bulletin, 22 October 1918]

WITH THE TWO THOUSAND CAMELS, GIVEN US IN July by General Allenby, we calculated that we could afford to send up to Azrak, for operations about Deraa, an expedition of four hundred and fifty camel corps of the Arab regular army, four Arab Vickers, twenty Arab Hotchkiss, a French battery of four mountain Q.F. 65 guns, two British aeroplanes, three British armoured cars with necessary tenders, a demolition company of Egyptian Camel Corps and a section of camel-Ghurkas. Besides these, Sherif Nasir and myself had our private body-guards of Arab camel-men. This made our total force one thousand strong, and its prospects were so sure that we made no provision (and had no means) for getting it back again. The supply problem, especially in petrol and ammunition, was a very great one, and we lived from hand to mouth, without, however, ever being in serious need.



The force left Ab el-Lissan in detachments early in September, and concentrated, without accident, to time at Azrak on the twelfth of the month. The distance from Akaba to Azrak was two hundred and ninety miles, and we used the wells of Jefer, Bair and Ammari on the way. At Azrak we had meant to collect the Rualla and descend in force on the Hauran, with direct assault on Deraa, which was only held by five hundred rifles—but this plan was spoiled by the unfortunate outburst of the King of Hejaz against Jaafar Pasha and the senior officers of the Northern Army, since the crisis he provoked upset the whole local temper, and delayed me in Ab el-Lissan till September 4. As a result, the Rualla never came together, and we had to modify our schemes. In the end, we decided to carry out a flying attack on the northern, western and southern railways at Deraa, with our regular troops, the Rualla horse under Khalid and Trad Shaalan, and such Hauran peasants as should be brave enough to declare for us.

As we sat at Azrak we put in a strong bluff towards Amman. Money was sent to Mithgal with very secret instructions to collect barley dumps for us and the British, in our combined surprise attack against Amman and Salt on the 18th. The Beni Sakhr were to mass at Ziza to help us. The rumour of this, and the rumour of our simultaneous intention on Deraa, confirmed by other factors supplied them from Palestine, kept the Turks' eyes fixed on the Jordan and east of it, where their lines were very long, expensive in men, and, despite their best efforts, inevitably vulnerable to a force of our mobility and range.

On the 13th we left Azrak and marched over the long Gian el-Khunna into the basalt screes of Jebel Druse. The Egyptian and Ghurka units were sent westward to cut the Amman line by Mafrak, but, owing to a misunderstanding with their guides, never got so far. However, our Bristol Fighter the same day, brought down a German two-seater in flames near Umm el-Jimal: so all was well. We got to Umtaiye, thirteen miles south-east of Deraa, on the 15th. This (and its neighbour Um el-Surab) were our forward bases, as about them were many cisterns of water of last year's rain. We were at once joined by the male population of the nearest villages, and by Sheikh Talal el-Hareidhin of

Tafas, the finest fighter of the Hauran, who had come to me in Azrak in 1917. He had agreed to be our guide, and marched with us till he died near Deraa, helping us day and night, our sponsor and backer in every village. But for his energy, courage and honesty, things would have gone hard with us many times.

It was still necessary for us to cut the railway between Deraa and Amman, not only to give colour to our supposed attack on the Fourth Army, but to prevent the reinforcement of Deraa from the south. It was our plan to put ourselves between Deraa and Palestine, to force the enemy to reinforce the former from the latter. Had we merely moved troops from Amman to Deraa we should be doing Palestine no good, and should probably have been rounded up and caught ourselves. The only unit now in hand to do this cutting—since the army must go forward at once—were the armoured cars, which are not ideal for the purpose, as you are almost as shut in to them as the enemy are shut out. However, we went down in all the cars we had to the railway and took a post of open-mouthed Turks too suddenly for them to realize that we were hostile. The post commanded a very pleasant four-arched bridge (kilo. 149) about twenty-five metres long and six metres high, with a flattering white marble inscription to Abd el-Hamid. We wrecked all this with one hundred and fifty pounds of gun-cotton, and did what we could to the station.

On the way back we had a mishap to one of the cars, and a vile road, so did not catch our army till after dawn on the 17th, going down to the line near Tell Arar, five miles north of Deraa. We suppressed a little post and some Kurdish cavalry, and put our demolition party on the line. The French blew up part of the bridge, and the Egyptians, working up the line towards Ghazale, did six hundred pairs of rails before dark on our new 'tulip' system.\* Meanwhile we climbed to the top

\* After long experiment we found this the cheapest and most destructive demolition for a line with steel sleepers. Dig a hole midway between the tracks under a mid-rail sleeper, and work out the ballast from the hollow section of the sleeper. Put in two slabs of guncotton, return the ballast to the hole, and light. If the charge is properly laid, and not in contact with

of Tell Arar, which commanded a complete view of Deraa, about four miles off, and we realized that there were nine enemy machines on the aerodrome. Our Bristol had been badly shot about, so they had no competition to fear, and for a time they did what they liked to us with bombs and machine-gunning. We had luck, and used our mountain guns and Hotchkiss for what they were worth, but were getting much the worst of it, till our only surviving machine, a B.E. 12 from Azrak turned up and sailed into the middle of the show. We watched with very mixed feelings, for the four Turkish two-seaters, and their four scouts were all of them much more than its equal in the air: however, by good hap or skill the B.E. came through them and led the whole circus of them away westward, and after to Ghazale, in pursuit, while we took advantage of our respite to organize and send off a mixed column to Mezerib, to cut the Palestine line. Just after this was done, the B.E. came back again with its attendant swarm, and telling us that it had finished its petrol, landed near us and turned over on to its back in the rough, while a Halberstadt came down and scored a direct hit on it with a bomb. Our pilot was unhurt, and with his Lewis gun and tracer bullets was soon most usefully running about just outside Deraa in a Ford, cutting the railway to prevent any kind of sortie of rolling stock.

We reached the lake at Mezerib about one p.m., and by two, had taken and looted the French station. The main station on the Palestine line proved too difficult, and we waited till three for the Camel Corps

the sleeper, a 12-inch fuse is enough. The gas expansion arches the sleeper eighteen inches above the rail, draws the metals six inches towards one another, humps them three inches above the horizontal, and twists the web from the bottom inwards. It drives a trough a foot deep across the formation. This three-dimension distortion of the rails is impossible to straighten, and they have to be cut or scrapped. A gang of four men can lay twenty 'tulips' in an hour on easy ballast, and for each two slabs (and single fuse) you ruin a sleeper, a yard of bank and two rails. The effect of a long stretch of line planted with these 'tulips' is most beautiful, since no two look just alike.

and guns to arrive, and then attacked it formally, and carried it by assault a few minutes later. As our only demolition parties were on the Damascus line, still demolishing, we could not do anything very extensive, but cleared the station, burnt a lot of rolling stock and two lorries, broke the points, and planted a fair assortment of 'tulips' down the line. The interruption of their main telegraph between Palestine and Syria, here and at Tell Arar, bothered the Turks a good deal. We spent the night at Mezerib, and were joined by hundreds and hundreds of the Hauran peasants: during the night some of us marched to within three hundred yards of Tell el-Shehab, intending to attack, but found that a German colonel with guns and reinforcements had just arrived. It was a consolation to know that on the critical 18th of the month we had moved the reserve regiment at Afuleh up to meet us, and we also pleased ourselves with blowing up the line west of Shehab, and, further west, at Zeizun.

Next morning we did some leisurely work on Mezerib station, and then moved past Remthe till mid-afternoon, when we were in position west of Nasib station. After considerable resistance and artillery work, we were able to carry the post on the big bridge north of the station, and to blow up the bridge. This was my seventy-ninth bridge. It had three seven-metre arches, was about twenty-five feet high, and had piers five feet thick—quite one of the finest we have destroyed.

We slept at Nasib and next morning marched gaily away to Umtaiye, speeded by a field gun which came to Nasib by train, and shelled our tail vigorously. At Umtaiye we rejoined the armoured cars, which had returned direct from Arar after covering the demolitions: and as we had that morning seen an enemy aeroplane land near the railway west of Umtaiye, we at once took two cars down to look at it. We found three two-seaters there, but for a deep gully could not rush their aerodrome. Two got up and troubled us, but we were able to put one thousand five hundred bullets into the third, and finished it. On our way back the other two machines returned from Deraa with bombs, and swooped at us four times; however, they placed them badly, and we escaped nearly unhurt. Armoured car work is fighting *de luxe*, but they give a sitting

shot to a well-handled plane. All the rest of the day at Umtaiye we were much bothered by enemy aircraft.

That night (the 19th) an armoured car, with the Egyptian and Ghurka units, went down to the railway about kilo. 154 and blew up some culverts and many rails. The object was to hinder the repair parties which (with escort of guns, machine-guns, and infantry) were hard at work on our destroyed bridge of the 16th at kilo. 149. We were also able to engage the repair train (by armoured car and Ford) at eighty yards range, and persuade it back to Mafrak at top speed. Next day I went on to Azrak, thence by air to Ramleh, and returned on the 22nd to Um el-Surab, with three Bristol Fighters. Before these finished breakfast they had been up twice, bagged a Turkish two-seater, and driven down three scouts. After this the Turks troubled our air no more; and after breakfast I went again to Azrak, and returned to Um el-Surab in the evening with Feisal and Nuri Shaalan, to meet the Handley-Page. It turned the scale in our favour through all the Hauran.

Next day the regulars went down to bridge kilo. 149, as its repair was nearly finished, and after a sharp fight drove off its guards, including very persistent German machine-gunners, destroyed more of the line, and burned the timber framing which the Turks had erected in seven days' work. The armoured cars and French guns did specially well to-day, and the Rualla horse under Nuri Shaalan personally. Nuri is quiet, and retiring, but a man of few words and great deeds, intelligent, well-informed, decisive, full of quiet humour, and the best Arab sheikh I have ever met. His tribe are like wax in his hands, and he knows what should be done and does it. The British forces had now (September 24) advanced to such a point that the Turkish Fourth Army, whom we had arrogated to ourselves as our birds, were ordered back to cover Deraa and Damascus. As a result of their haste and our holding of the railway, they abandoned the idea of falling back from Amman by rail, and proceeded towards us by road with all their guns and transport. We sent our cavalry at them, and forced them to leave the guns and carts between Mafrak and Nasib. They also lost a lot of men, and what had been a formal column of route became a confused mass of fugitives, who

never had time to reform again. It seemed to us, however, that we might now venture to put ourselves between Deraa and Damascus (at some such point as Sheikh Saad) so as to force the immediate evacuation of the former: we might then hope to be able to do business, not only with this mob of the Fourth Army as it emerged from Deraa, but with such remnants of the Palestine Army as escaped by Semakh and Irbid. Accordingly, the camelry, guns, and machine-guns, marched northward on the 25th, till, on the afternoon of the 26th, they were able to descend on the railway and cross it between Ghazale and Ezra.

This move took the Turks (by now panic-stricken) completely by surprise. The railway had been opened for traffic (after our damage of the 17th) on the previous day, but we now cut it again—and it remained cut till the close of operations, and penned into Deraa six complete trains, which are now ours—took Ghazale with its two hundred men and two guns, took Ezra, held only by the Algerian, Abd el-Kader, a pro-Türk religious fanatic, and a good deal of stores. We then passed on and slept near Sheikh Miskin. The Turks received fantastic reports of our strength, and ordered the immediate evacuation of Deraa by road, while the Germans burnt their five remaining aeroplanes. This gave us a total of eleven enemy machines accounted for by our force since September 13.

At dawn on the 27th we reached Sheikh Saad, in time to take prisoner two Austro-Türk machine-gun companies on their way to Kuneitra to oppose the British advancing by that road. We then stood on the hill at Sheikh Saad, and watched the country-side. When we saw a small enemy column we went out and took it: when we saw a large column, we lay low. Our excuse must be physical exhaustion—also we were only nine hundred strong.

Aeroplanes now dropped us a message that there were two columns of Turks advancing on us. One from Deraa was six thousand strong, and one from Mezerib, two thousand strong. We determined that the second was about our size, and marched the regulars out to meet it just north of Tafas, while sending our Hauran horse out to hang on to the skirts of the large column, and some unmounted peasants to secure the



Tel el-Shehab bridge, which the Turks were mining. We were too late (since on the way we had a profitable affair with an infantry battalion) to prevent the Mezerib column getting into Tafas. They strengthened themselves there, and as at Turaa, the last village they had entered, allowed themselves to rape all the women they could catch. We attacked them with all arms as they marched out later, and bent the head of their column back towards Tell Arar. When Sherif Bey, the Turkish Commander of the Lancer rearguard in the village, saw this he ordered that the inhabitants be killed. These included some twenty small children (killed with lances and rifles), and about forty women. I noticed particularly one pregnant woman, who had been forced down on a saw-bayonet. Unfortunately, Talal, the Sheikh of Tafas, who, as mentioned, had been a tower of strength to us from the beginning, and who was one of the coolest and boldest horsemen I have ever met, was in front with Auda abu Tayi and myself when we saw these sights. He gave a horrible cry, wrapped his headcloth about his face, put spurs to his horse, and, rocking in the saddle, galloped at full speed into the midst of the retiring column, and fell, himself and his mare, riddled with machine-gun bullets, among their lance points.

With Auda's help we were able to cut the enemy column into three. The third section, with German machine-gunners resisted magnificently, and got off, not cheaply, with Jemal Pasha in his car in their midst. The second and leading portions after a bitter struggle, we wiped out completely. We ordered 'no prisoners' and the men obeyed, except that the reserve company took two hundred and fifty men (including many German A.S.C.) alive. Later, however, they found one of our men with a fractured thigh who had been afterwards pinned to the ground by two mortal thrusts with German bayonets. Then we turned our Hotchkiss on the prisoners and made an end of them, they saying nothing. The common delusion that the Turk is a clean and merciful fighter led some of the British troops to criticize Arab methods a little later—but they had not entered Turaa or Tafas, or watched the Turks swing their wounded by the hands and feet into a burning railway truck, as had been the lot of the Arab army at Jerdun. As for the villagers, they



and their ancestors have been for five hundred years ground down by the tyranny of these Turks.

Our Rualla horse were then sent on straight to Deraa, with orders to scatter any Turkish formations met with on the road, and to occupy the place. They had two or three fights on their way down, and took Deraa station at a whirlwind gallop, riding over all the trenches, and blotting out the enemy elements that still tried to hold the place. Next morning they brought us three hundred mule-mounted infantry prisoners, and about two hundred infantrymen and two guns. The Turks and Germans had unfortunately burnt their stores before we took it.

The regular troops spent that night—a very uneasy night it was—at Sheikh Saad. We did not yet know that we had won, since there was always a risk of our being washed away by a great wave of the enemy in retreat. I went out to see our Haurani horse, near Sheikh Miskin, where they were tenaciously clinging on to the great Turkish column from Deraa, giving much more than they were getting. At midnight I was back in Sheikh Saad, and found Nasir and Nuri just off for Deraa: we had a race, in which my camel-corps beat the headquarters horses and joined Trad Shaalan in Deraa village at dawn. We had some little work to do then in making the necessary local arrangements.

Afterwards I rode out westwards till I met the outposts of the Fourth Division (British) and guided them into Deraa. They only stayed there one night and early on the 29th they left for Damascus, after assigning to us the duty of right-flank guard. Accordingly, we marched up the Hejaz line, which suited us very well, for first our three hundred Rualla and Abu Tayi horse, and then our nine hundred Rualla camels, caught up with our Hauran cavalry harassing the Turkish Deraa column near Mesmiye.

The aeroplanes had reported this column as six thousand strong. At Sheikh Miskin on the second day it looked about five thousand strong. At Mesmiye it was said to be three thousand strong, and at Kiswe, where our horse headed them into General Gregory's Brigade, there were about two thousand of them. The whole of this gradual attrition was the work of the irregulars, since the Arab Regular Army, not being

skilled camelmen, marched little faster than the British cavalry, and never came into action after Deraa. The Kiswe fight was a satisfactory affair. The Turks came along the valley of the Hejaz line, in a long, straggling column, halting every few miles to bring their guns into action against the Arabs. Nasir knew that the leading brigade of the Fourth Division was nearing Khan Denun, so he galloped forward with his slaves, and Nuri Shaalan and his slaves, about thirty in all, headed the Turkish column off between Jebel Mania and the trees of Khiata, and threw himself into the trees to delay them till the British were ready. The British had not seen or heard of this enemy column, and were in order of march, but as soon as they had learned what was forward they got their cavalry to north, west, and south of them, and opened on them with their Horse Artillery. It was just sunset when the affair began, but before it was too dark to see, the Turks were a scattered mob, running up the steep slopes of Mania and over it, in their ignorance that the Wuld Ali and Abu Tayi were waiting for them there in force. This ended the history of the Fourth Army. Old Auda, tired of slaughter, took the last six hundred prisoners. In all we had killed nearly five thousand of them, captured about eight thousand (as we took them we stripped them, and sent them to the nearest village, where they will be put to work on the land till further notice) and counted spoils of about one hundred and fifty machine-guns and from twenty-five to thirty guns.

Our horse rode on that evening (September 30) into Damascus, where the burning ammunition dumps turned night into day. Away back at Kiswe the glare was painful, and the roar and reverberation of the explosions kept us all awake. In Damascus, Shukri el-Ayubi and the town council had proclaimed the King of the Arabs and hoisted the Arab flag as soon as Mustafa Kemal and Jemal had gone. The Turk and German morale was so low that they had marched out beneath the Arab flag without protest: and so good was the civil control that little or no looting took place.

Nasir, old Nuri, Major Stirling and myself, entered the morning of October 1, receiving a tremendous but impromptu greeting from the Moslems of the town.

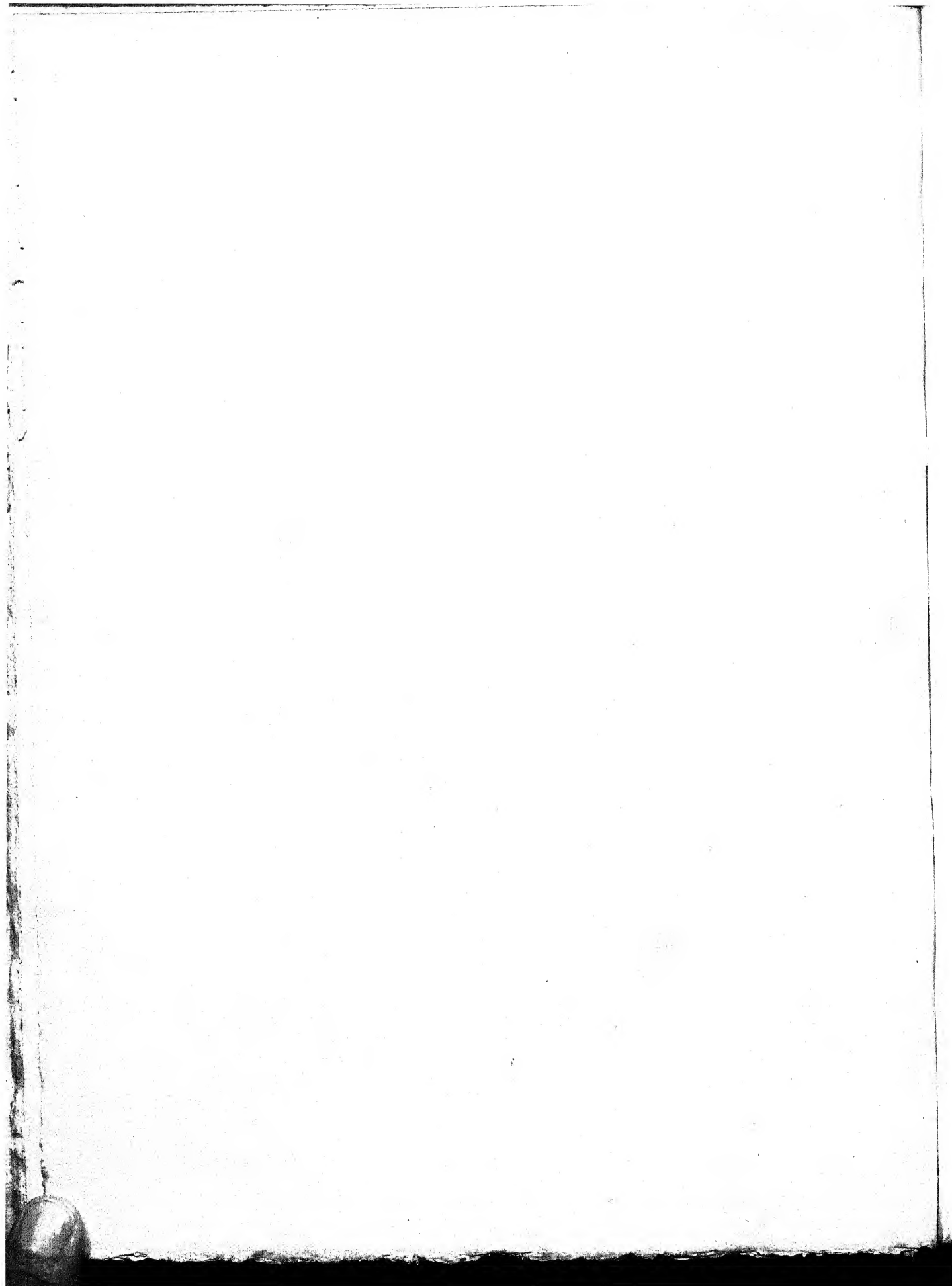
I think I should put on record a word of what happened after we got in. I found at the Town Hall Mohammed Said and Abd el-Kadir, the Algerians, who had just assumed possession of the provisional civil government, since there was no one in Damascus who could fight their Moorish bodyguard. They are both insane, and as well pro-Turkish and religious fanatics of the most unpleasant sort. In consequence I sent for them, and before the *belediyeh* and the *shiyukh el-harrat*, announced that, as Feisal's representative, I declared Shukri el-Ayubi Arab Military Governor (Ali Riza, the intended Governor, was missing), and the provisional civil administration of the Algerians dissolved. They took it rather hard, and had to be sent home. That evening Abd el-Kadir called together his friends and some leading Druses, and made them an impassioned speech, denouncing the Sherif as a British puppet, and calling on them to strike a blow for the Faith in Damascus. By morning this had degenerated into pure looting, and we called out the Arab troops, put Hotchkiss round the central square, and imposed peace in three hours, after inflicting about twenty casualties.

The part played by the Druses was an ignoble one. We had never expected them to join the Sherif, and had therefore excluded them from our calculations of war-wages. After the British victory in Palestine they began to believe that perhaps they were on the wrong side: so when we came forward the second time to Deraa they all collected round Sultan el-Atrash and Husein abu Naif, our two firm friends in Jebel Druse, clamouring for military service. Sultan believed them, and marched to Ghazale to join us with about one thousand five hundred of them, all mounted. They hung round behind our horse, never entering the fight, and waited till Damascus was taken. They then paraded before the Sherif, and began to loot the inhabitants. After the Arabs checked them at this and drove them out of the town to Jaraman, they came to me, and said that their real feelings were pro-British. As they were the only people in all Syria to volunteer for service against Egypt in 1914, this was hard to credit, and I gave them little satisfaction. They are greedy braggarts who soon knock under to a show of force.

## GLOSSARY

Aalim	Learned man	Maidan	Part of Damas-
Abu... Akhu...	Father of . . .		cus
	Brother of . . .	Mofraza	Mixed Detach-
Ageyl	Camel-corps		ment
Allah yinsur el	'God give	Mohafiz	Military
Din	victory to the		Governor
	Religion'	Mohafiz Alai	Regiment used
Ashraf	Plural of Sherif		for guard pur-
Bab-Arab	Commissioner		poses
	for Bedouin	Muedhdhin	Caller to Prayer
	Affairs	Murettab	Composite, of
			various units
Bedu	Bedouin		Pillion-rider on
Belediyeh	Municipality	Redif	a camel
Bir	Well		Rider directing
Dhelul	Camel	Rikab	a camel
Dhurra	Indian corn		'Our Lord'
Dira	Grazing-ground	Sayidna	Wayside foun-
Emir	'Commander of	Sebil	tain
el-Muminin	the Faithful'		Torrent
	(caliph's title)	Seil	Islamic law
Ethil and Tarfa	Tamarisks	Sharia	Religious noble
Ghadir	Pool	Sherif	of the blood of
Girbi	Water-skin		Mohammed;
Hadhar	Settled		the 'Sherif of
Harra(h)	Lava		Mecca' was a
Idhan	Call to prayer		vassal Prince of
Imama	Turban		the Turkish
Imaret	Administration		Empire
	of Mecca		Sheikhs of the
Jihad	Holy War	Shiyukh	Quarter
Khadim	'Servants'	el-harrat	'My Lord'
Kilim	Thin rug	Sidi	

S.N.O.	Senior Naval Officer	Wasm	Crest and cattle- brand
Tarika	Religious Order	Yeni Turan	'New Turanian' or Pan-Turkish
Themail	Shallow water- holes		movement
Ulema	Learned men	Ziaret	Shrine
Wadi	Watercourse & its valley		



Printed by Christopher Sandford and Owen Rutter at the Golden Cockerel Press in Perpetua type on Arnold's mould-made paper. The Edition is limited to 1,000 numbered copies, of which numbers 1-30 are bound in white pig-skin and accompanied by a collotype reproduction of part of T. E. Lawrence's manuscript of 'The Seven Pillars of Wisdom'. Numbers 31-1,000 are bound in  $\frac{1}{4}$  Niger. Number: 151



915.3 LAW. (18119)

Call No.

Secret Despatches

Accession No.

from Arabic.

Title

Lawrence T.E

Author

11 BORROWER'S | DATE | 11 BORROWER'S | DATE